SONIC THE HEDGEHOG™

THE IDW COLLECTION

03

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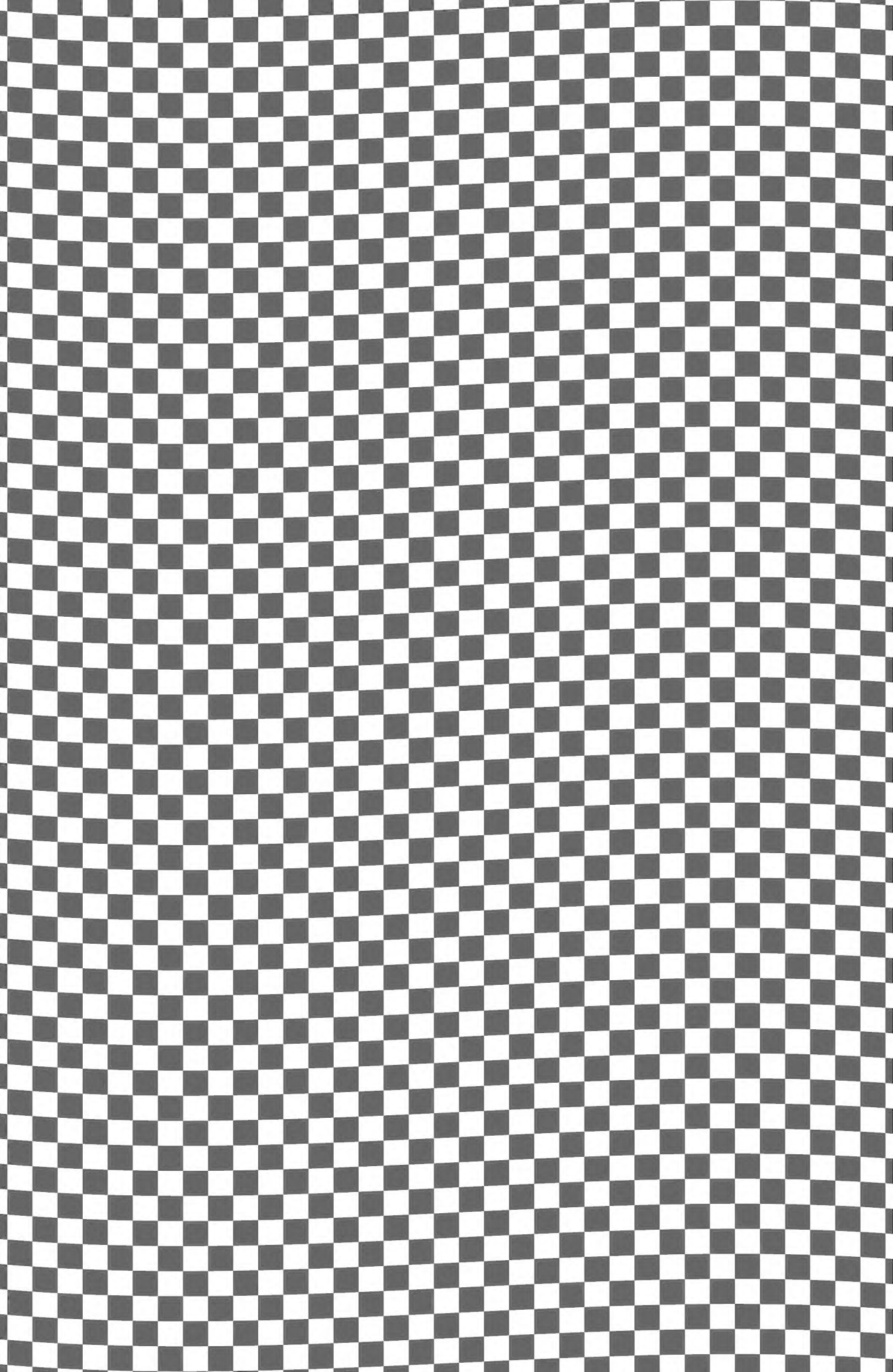

THE IDW COLLECTION

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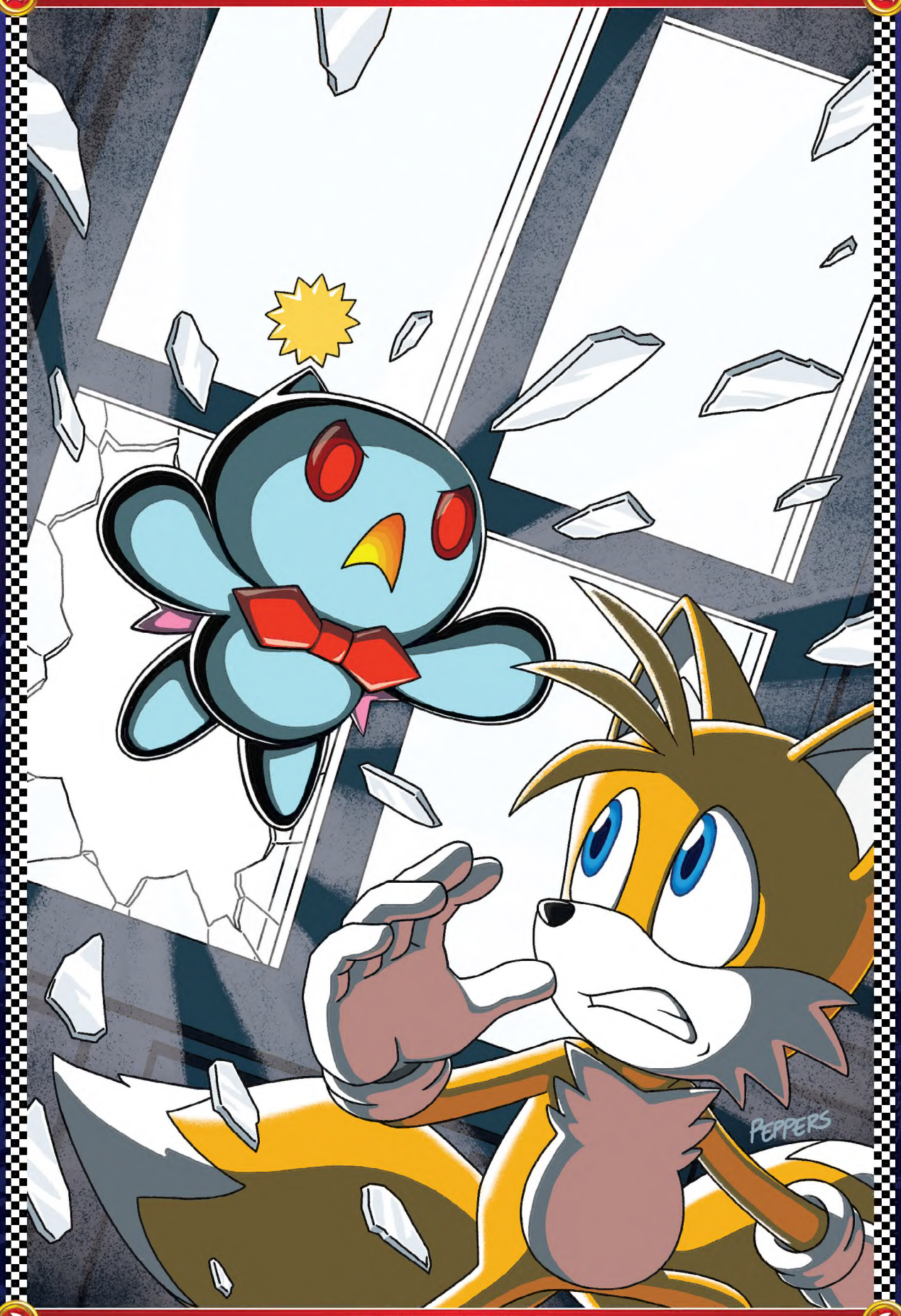

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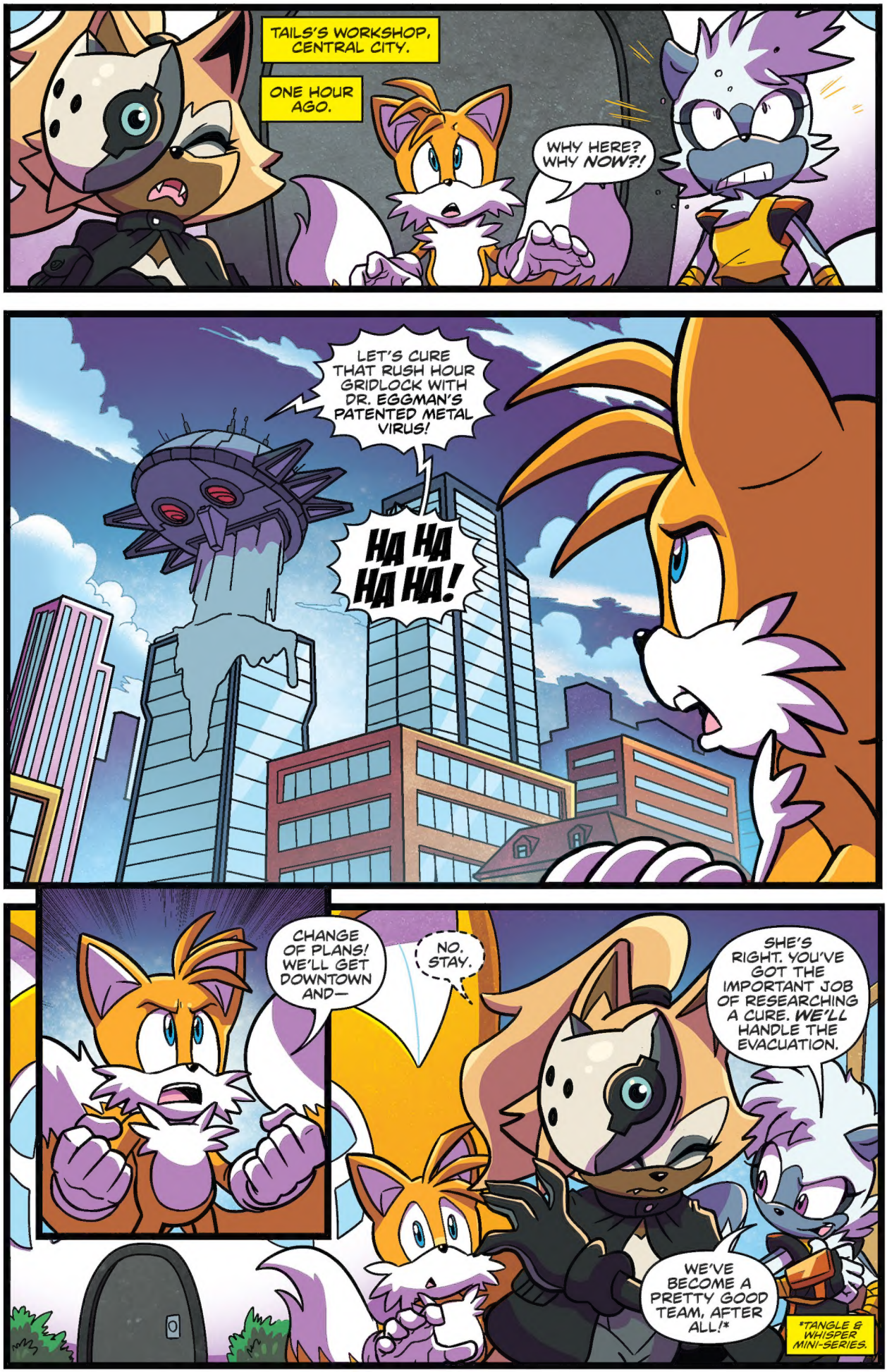
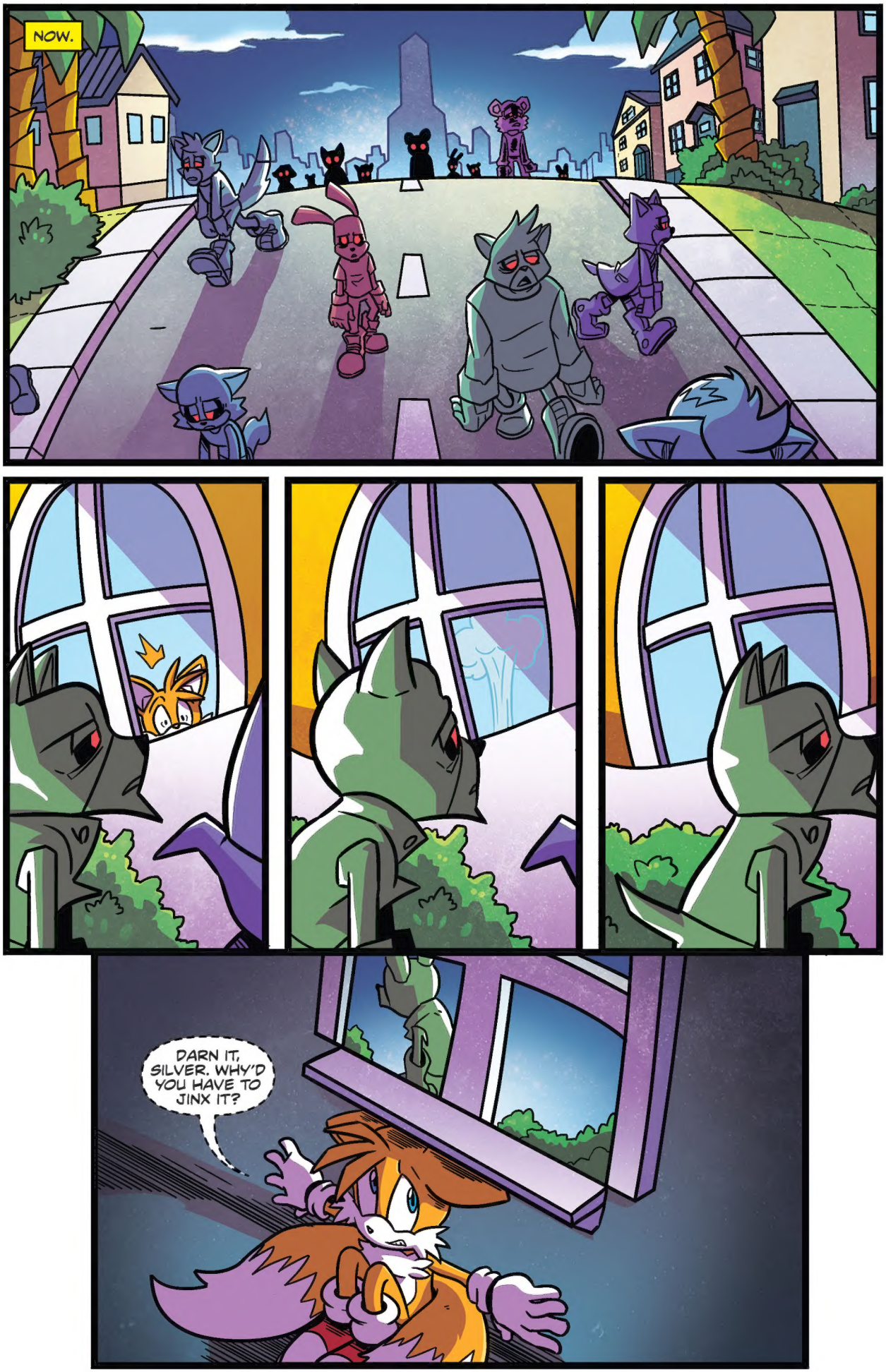
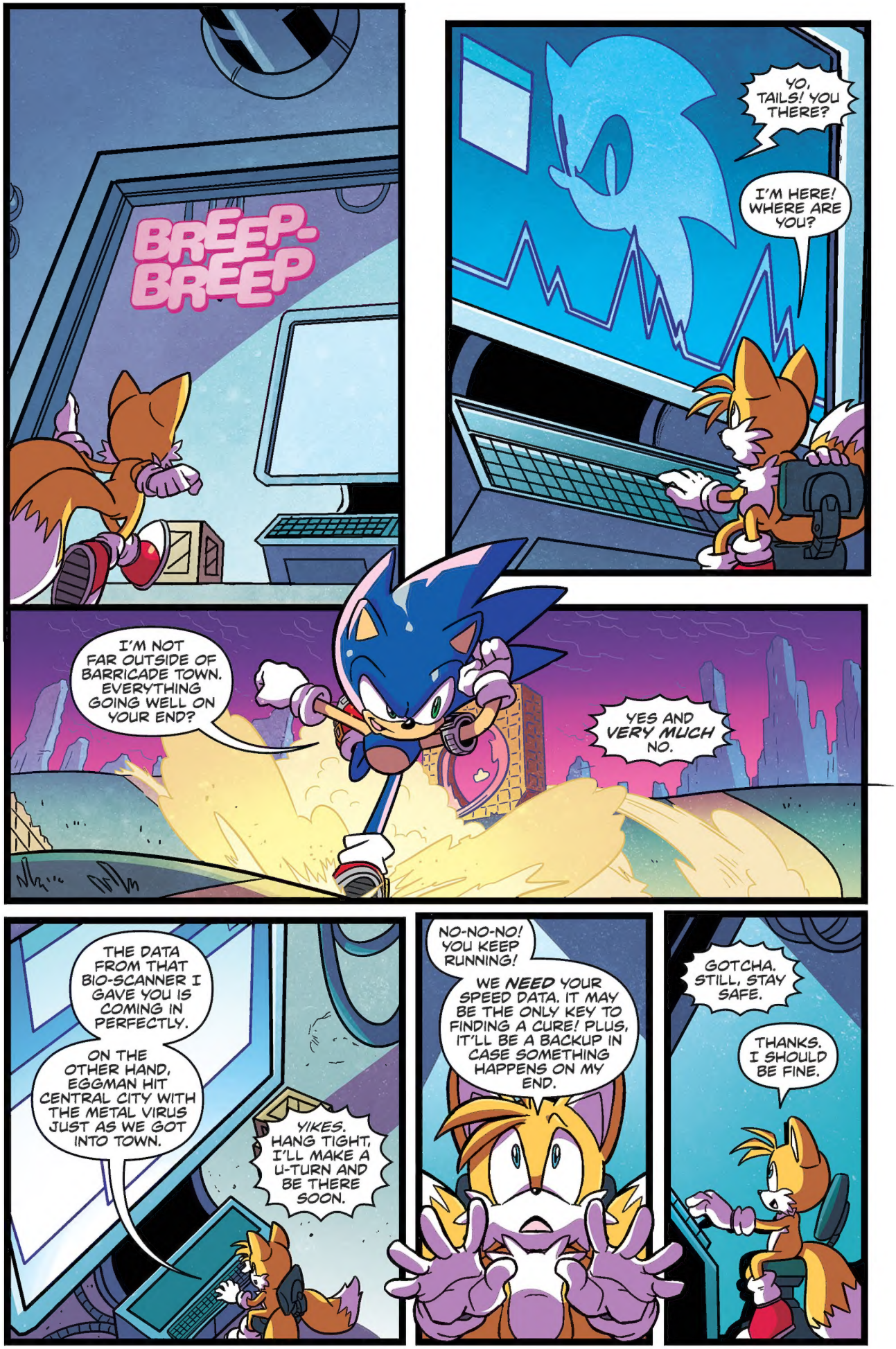
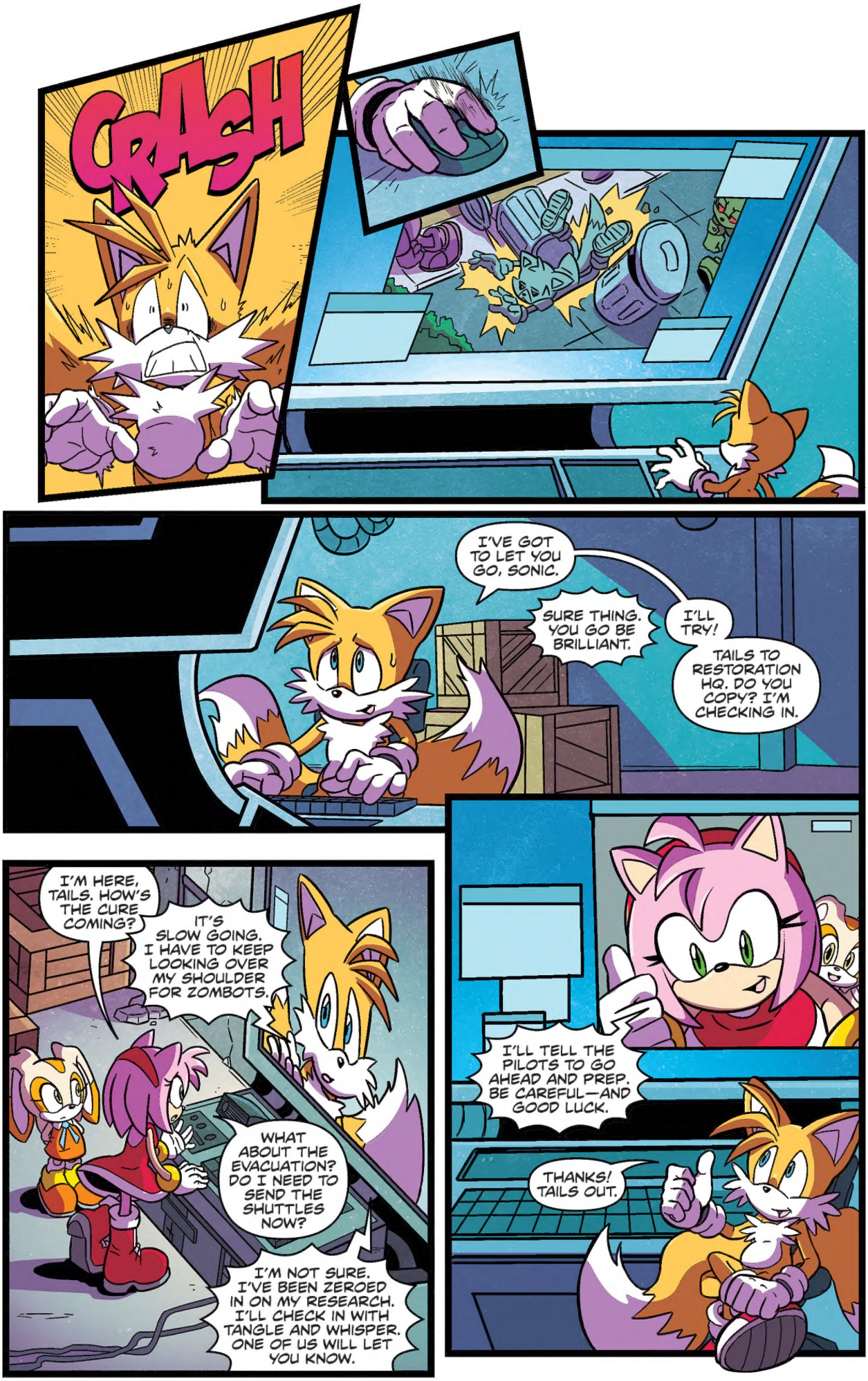
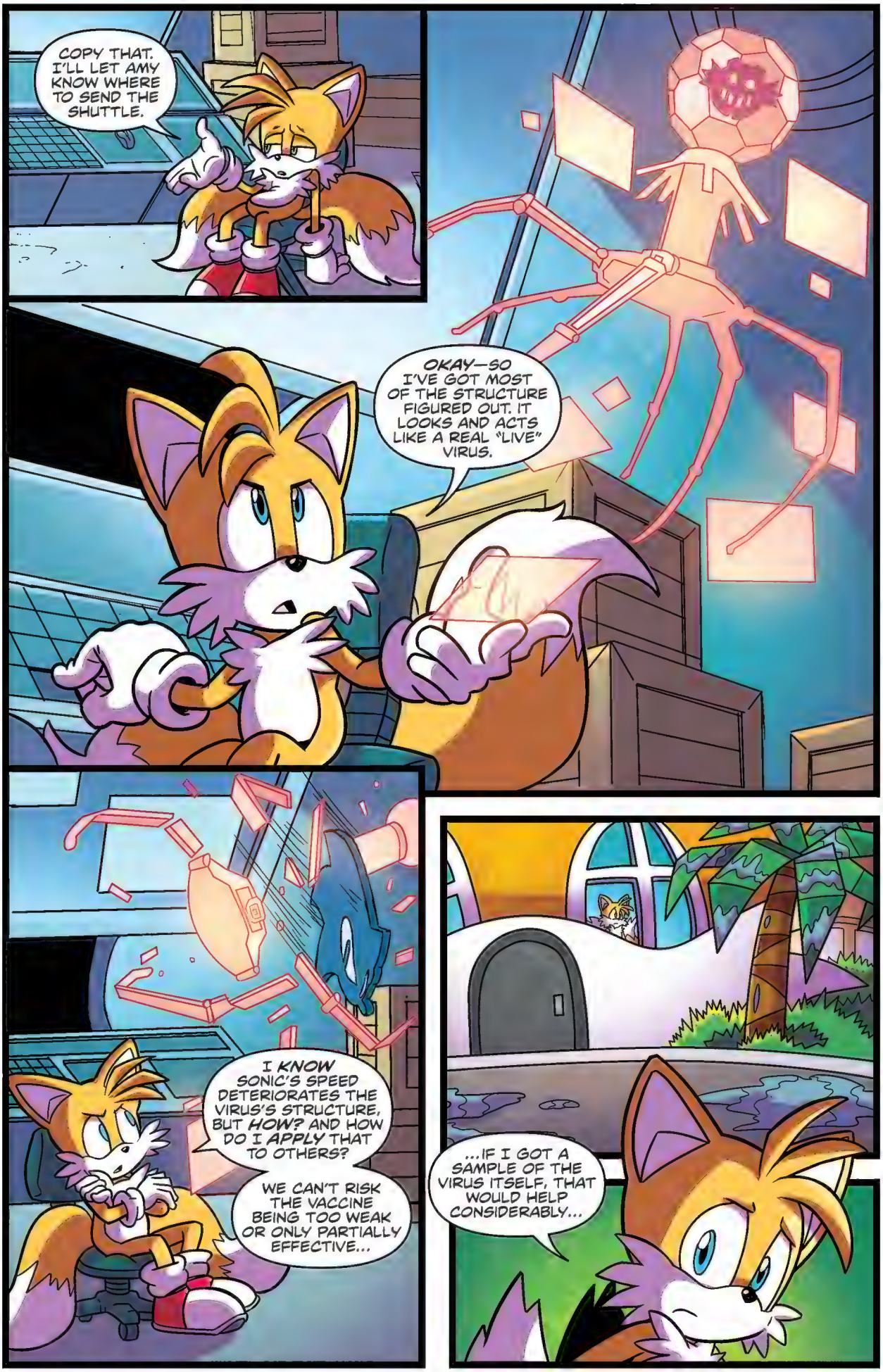

TAILS'S WORKSHOP, CENTRAL CITY.
ONE HOUR AGO.
WHY HERE? WHY NOW?!
LET'S CURE THAT RUSH HOUR GRIDLOCK WITH DR. EGGMAN'S PATENTED METAL VIRUS!
HA HA HA HA!
CHANGE OF PLANS! WE'LL GET DOWNTOWN AND—
NO. STAY.
SHE'S RIGHT. YOU'VE GOT THE IMPORTANT JOB OF RESEARCHING A CURE. WE'LL HANDLE THE EVACUATION.
WE'VE BECOME A PRETTY GOOD TEAM, AFTER ALL!*
*TANGLE & WHISPER MINI-SERIES.

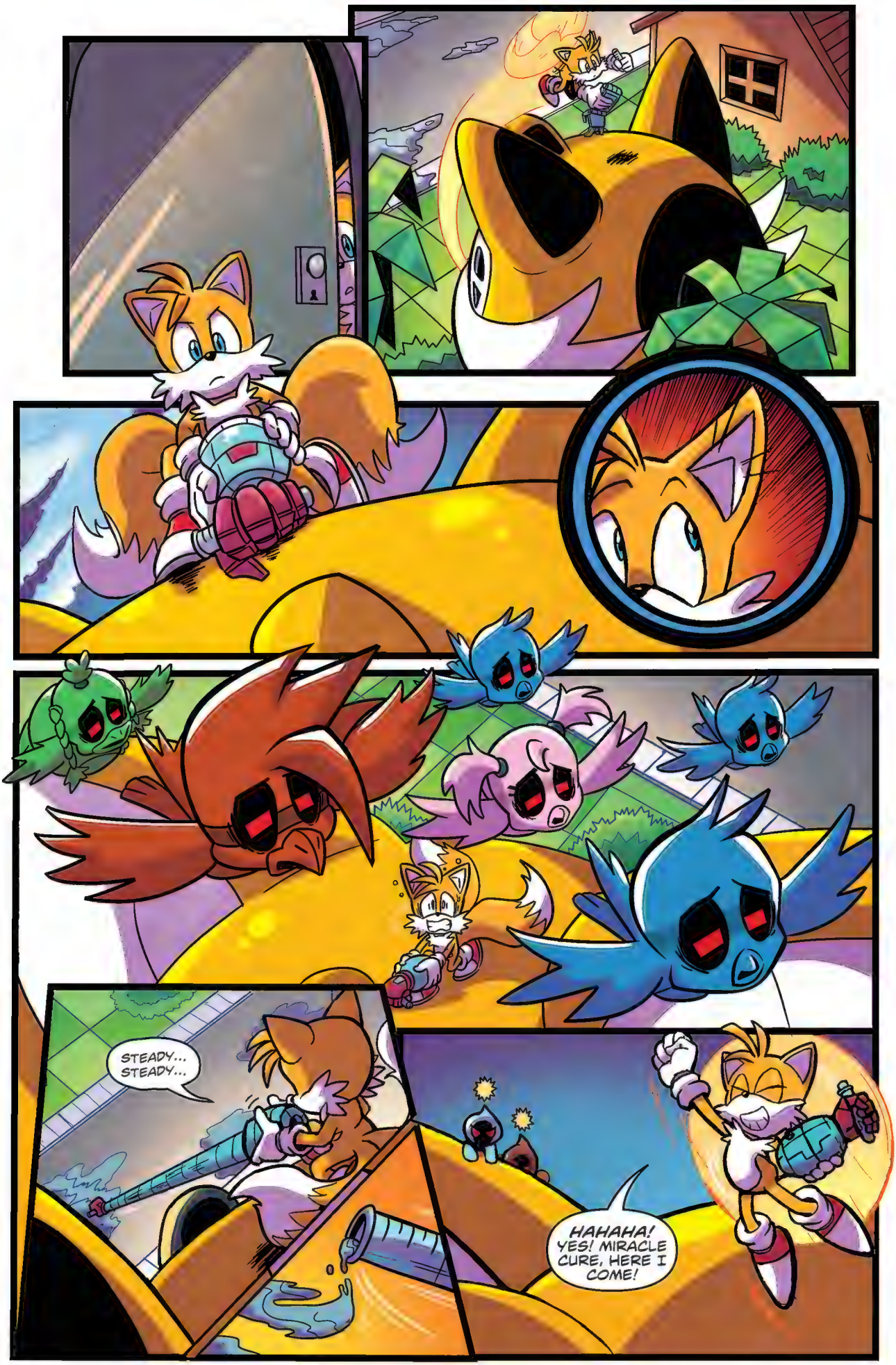

NOW.
DARN IT, SILVER. WHY'D YOU HAVE TO JINX IT?

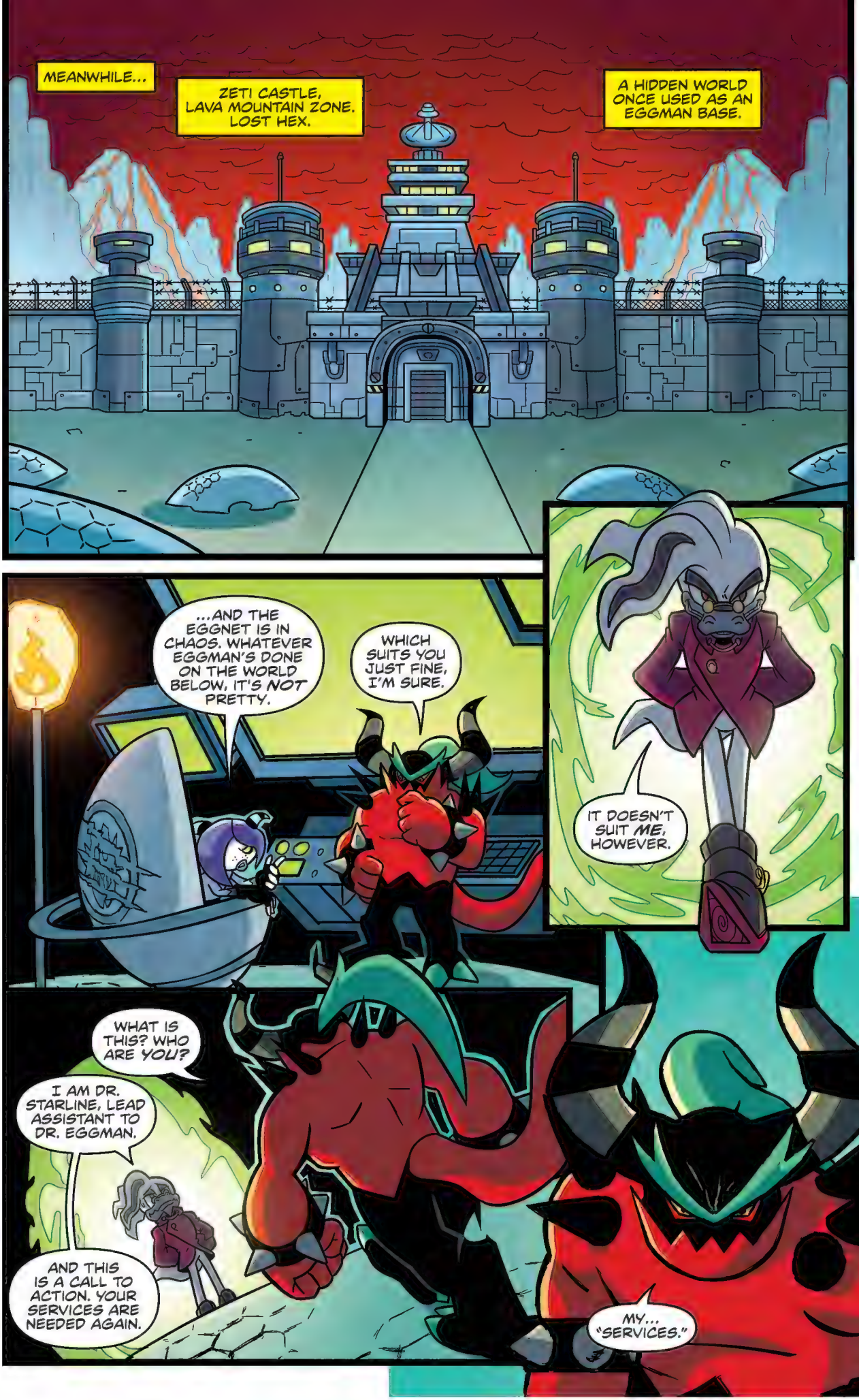

BREEP-BREEP
YO, TAILS! YOU THERE?
I'M HERE! WHERE ARE YOU?
I'M NOT FAR OUTSIDE OF BARRICADE TOWN. EVERYTHING GOING WELL ON YOUR END?
YES AND VERY MUCH NO.
THE DATA FROM THAT BIO-SCANNER I GAVE YOU IS COMING IN PERFECTLY.
ON THE OTHER HAND, EGGMAN HIT CENTRAL CITY WITH THE METAL VIRUS JUST AS WE GOT INTO TOWN.
YIKES. HANG TIGHT, I'LL MAKE A U-TURN AND BE THERE SOON.
NO-NO-NO! YOU KEEP RUNNING!
WE NEED YOUR SPEED DATA. IT MAY BE THE ONLY KEY TO FINDING A CURE! PLUS, IT'LL BE A BACKUP IN CASE SOMETHING HAPPENS ON MY END.
GOTCHA. STILL, STAY SAFE.
THANKS. I SHOULD BE FINE.

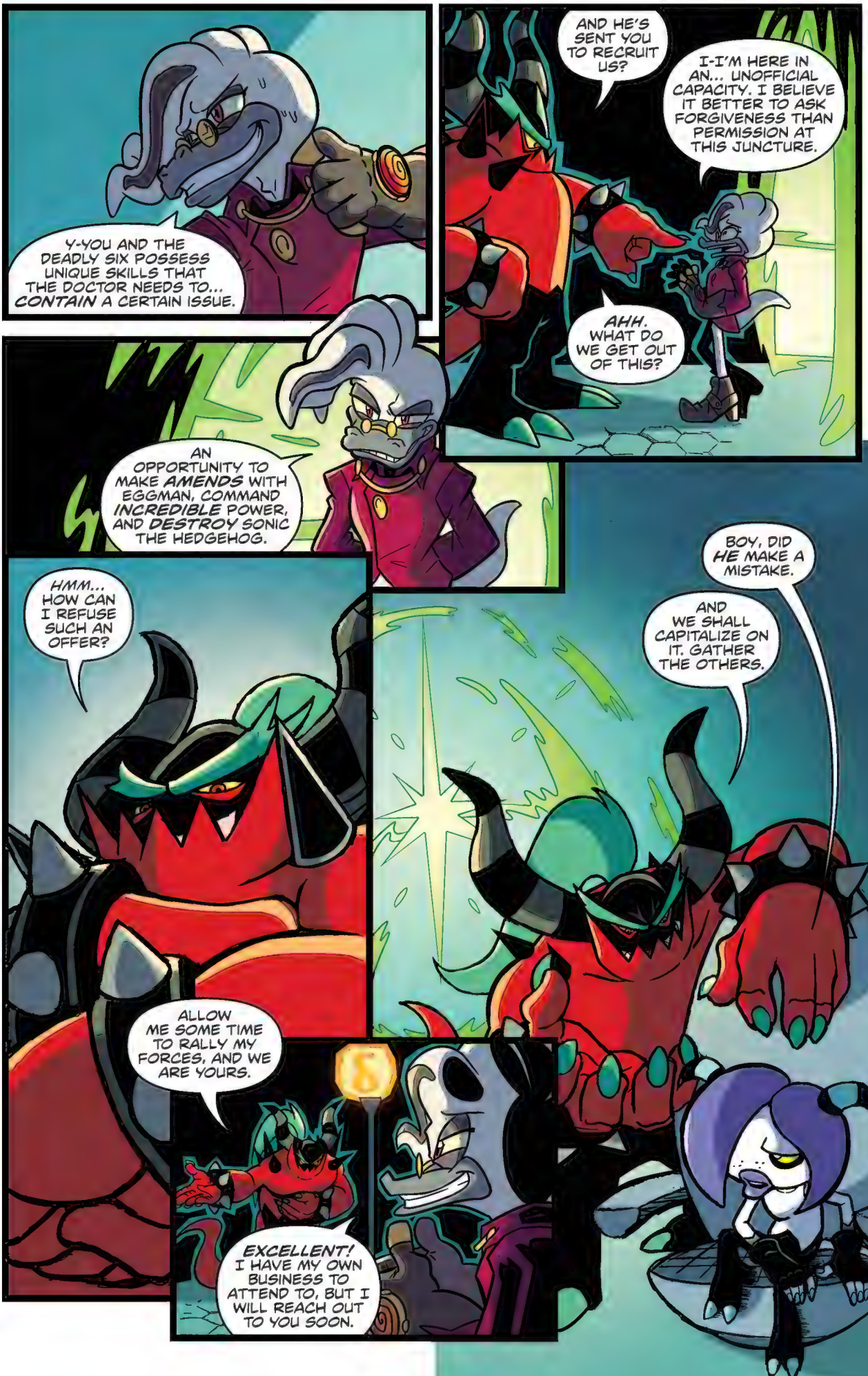

CRASH
I'VE GOT TO LET YOU GO, SONIC.
SURE THING. YOU GO BE BRILLIANT.
I'LL TRY!
TAILS TO RESTORATION HQ. DO YOU COPY? I'M CHECKING IN.
I'M HERE, TAILS. HOW'S THE CURE COMING?
IT'S SLOW GOING. I HAVE TO KEEP LOOKING OVER MY SHOULDER FOR ZOMBOTS.
WHAT ABOUT THE EVACUATION? DO I NEED TO SEND THE SHUTTLES NOW?
I'M NOT SURE. I'VE BEEN ZEROED IN ON MY RESEARCH. I'LL CHECK IN WITH TANGLE AND WHISPER. ONE OF US WILL LET YOU KNOW.
I'LL TELL THE PILOTS TO GO AHEAD AND PREP. BE CAREFUL—AND GOOD LUCK.
THANKS! TAILS OUT.

TAILS TO TANGLE AND WHISPER! HOW GOES THE EVACUATION?
OH, YOU KNOW. RUNNING. SCREAMING. PANIC. SKIN-OF-OUR-TEETH RESCUES.
IT WOULD BE SO COOL IF IT WASN'T SO—Y'KNOW—HORRIBLE AND AWFUL.
TWANG
WE'VE GOT— YIKES!
WHEW! WE'VE GOT A FEW FOLKS, AND WE'RE LEADING THEM TO A DOCK. BUT IT'S NASTY DOWN HERE, KIDDO. WE NEED YOU TO WORK ON THAT CURE FAST.


COPY THAT. I'LL LET AMY KNOW WHERE TO SEND THE SHUTTLE.
OKAY—SO I'VE GOT MOST OF THE STRUCTURE FIGURED OUT. IT LOOKS AND ACTS LIKE A REAL "LIVE" VIRUS.
I KNOW SONIC'S SPEED DETERIORATES THE VIRUS'S STRUCTURE, BUT HOW? AND HOW DO I APPLY THAT TO OTHERS?
WE CAN'T RISK THE VACCINE BEING TOO WEAK OR ONLY PARTIALLY EFFECTIVE...
...IF I GOT A SAMPLE OF THE VIRUS ITSELF, THAT WOULD HELP CONSIDERABLY...


STEADY... STEADY...
HAHAHA! YES! MIRACLE CURE, HERE I COME!


MEANWHILE...
ZETI CASTLE, LAVA MOUNTAIN ZONE. LOST HEX.
A HIDDEN WORLD ONCE USED AS AN EGGMAN BASE.
...AND THE EGGNET IS IN CHAOS. WHATEVER EGGMAN'S DONE ON THE WORLD BELOW, IT'S NOT PRETTY.
WHICH SUITS YOU JUST FINE, I'M SURE.
IT DOESN'T SUIT ME, HOWEVER.
WHAT IS THIS? WHO ARE YOU?
I AM DR. STARLINE, LEAD ASSISTANT TO DR. EGGMAN.
AND THIS IS A CALL TO ACTION. YOUR SERVICES ARE NEEDED AGAIN.
MY... "SERVICES."


Y-YOU AND THE DEADLY SIX POSSESS UNIQUE SKILLS THAT THE DOCTOR NEEDS TO... CONTAIN A CERTAIN ISSUE.
AND HE'S SENT YOU TO RECRUIT US?
I-I'M HERE IN AN... UNOFFICIAL CAPACITY. I BELIEVE IT BETTER TO ASK FORGIVENESS THAN PERMISSION AT THIS JUNCTURE.
AHH. WHAT DO WE GET OUT OF THIS?
AN OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE AMENDS WITH EGGMAN, COMMAND INCREDIBLE POWER, AND DESTROY SONIC THE HEDGEHOG.
HMM... HOW CAN I REFUSE SUCH AN OFFER?
BOY, DID HE MAKE A MISTAKE.
AND WE SHALL CAPITALIZE ON IT. GATHER THE OTHERS.
ALLOW ME SOME TIME TO RALLY MY FORCES, AND WE ARE YOURS.
EXCELLENT! I HAVE MY OWN BUSINESS TO ATTEND TO, BUT I WILL REACH OUT TO YOU SOON.

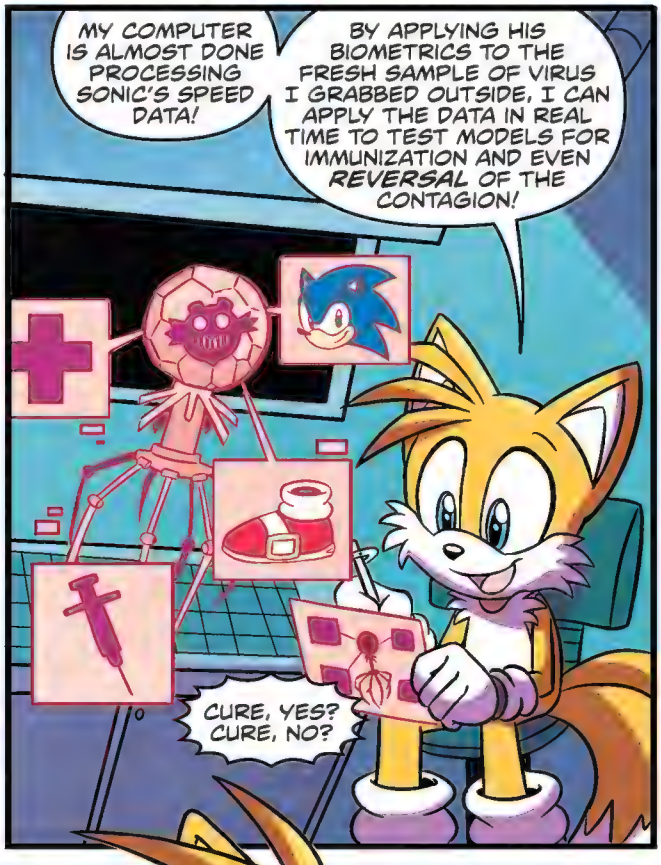
WEE-HEE-HEE! THAT'S IT! LOOK AT ME! I'M THE MOST INTERESTING PERSON OUT HERE!
WHOA!
OKAY! FAIR ENOUGH! UMM... TIME-OUT?
SKYOW
THAT WAS AWESOME!
THANKS.
MOVE.

OKAY! NOW WHAT?
HELP?
GOOD IDEA!
AMY! IT'S TANGLE! WHAT'S THE E.T.A. ON SOME BACK-UP?
AMY? CREAM? VECTOR? ANYBODY?
FWEEE
THAT'S... OMINOUS. UM... SILVER? DO YOU COPY? CAN YOU LEND US A HAND?
ICE PARADISE IS ON FIRE! I'VE GOT MY HANDS FULL!

KINDA LATE TO ASK, BUT IS IT OKAY TO BE SHOOTING YOUR LITTLE WISP BUDDIES AT THE ZOMBOTS?
THEY'RE PURE ENERGY WHEN FIRED.
OH, COOL! LAST THING WE NEED IS ZOMBOT WISPS— EEK!
WHOOSH
NICE EXIT!

...EXCEPT NOW WE'RE A LONG WAY FROM THE RENDEZVOUS.
CALL TAILS?

TAILS? CAN YOU HEAR ME?
YEAH— ARE YOU OKAY?
WE'RE GOOD, BUT WE'VE GOT A WHOLE BUNCH OF ZOMBOTS BETWEEN US AND THE DOCK, AND NO ONE TO HELP US OUT. HOW'S THAT CURE COMING?


MY COMPUTER IS ALMOST DONE PROCESSING SONIC'S SPEED DATA!
BY APPLYING HIS BIOMETRICS TO THE FRESH SAMPLE OF VIRUS I GRABBED OUTSIDE, I CAN APPLY THE DATA IN REAL TIME TO TEST MODELS FOR IMMUNIZATION AND EVEN *REVERSAL* OF THE CONTAGION!
CURE, YES? CURE, NO?

Y-YES. I THINK... I THINK *I'VE GOT IT!*

LET ME UPLOAD IT ALL TO RESTORATION HQ'S SERVER AND I'LL COME BACK YOU UP!
THE NIGHTMARE WILL FINALLY BE OVER!
WOO-HOO! WAY TO GO—
BYOOOPOW
NONONO! WHAT HAPPENED?!
ZZZT
DON'T PANIC! JUST GRAB THE SERVER BLADES! I CAN PLUG THEM IN AT HEADQUARTERS AND—

SMASH
CRASH
ZWEE
SLAM SLAM SLAM

BOOM
I HAD IT. I WAS SO CLOSE.
AND I CAN'T BLAME YOU...
BOOM
WHRRRR-CLICK
SCREEEEECH

TAILS! WE'RE HEADING DOWN TO THE DOCK! WHERE ARE YOU?!
SCREEEECH
P-3a
THAT WAS AMAZING!
I'LL COVER YOU. GO PROTECT THE SURVIVORS.
GOTCHA! BUT I WANNA DRIVE THAT LATER!

YEAH! WOO! PERFECT TIMING!
WHY... WHY IS THERE ONLY ONE?
ANY UNWELCOME GUESTS TRYING TO TAG ALONG?
CLEAR.
C'MON, PEOPLE! OUR RIDE IS HERE! HUSTLE! HUSTLE! HUSTLE!
BOOM

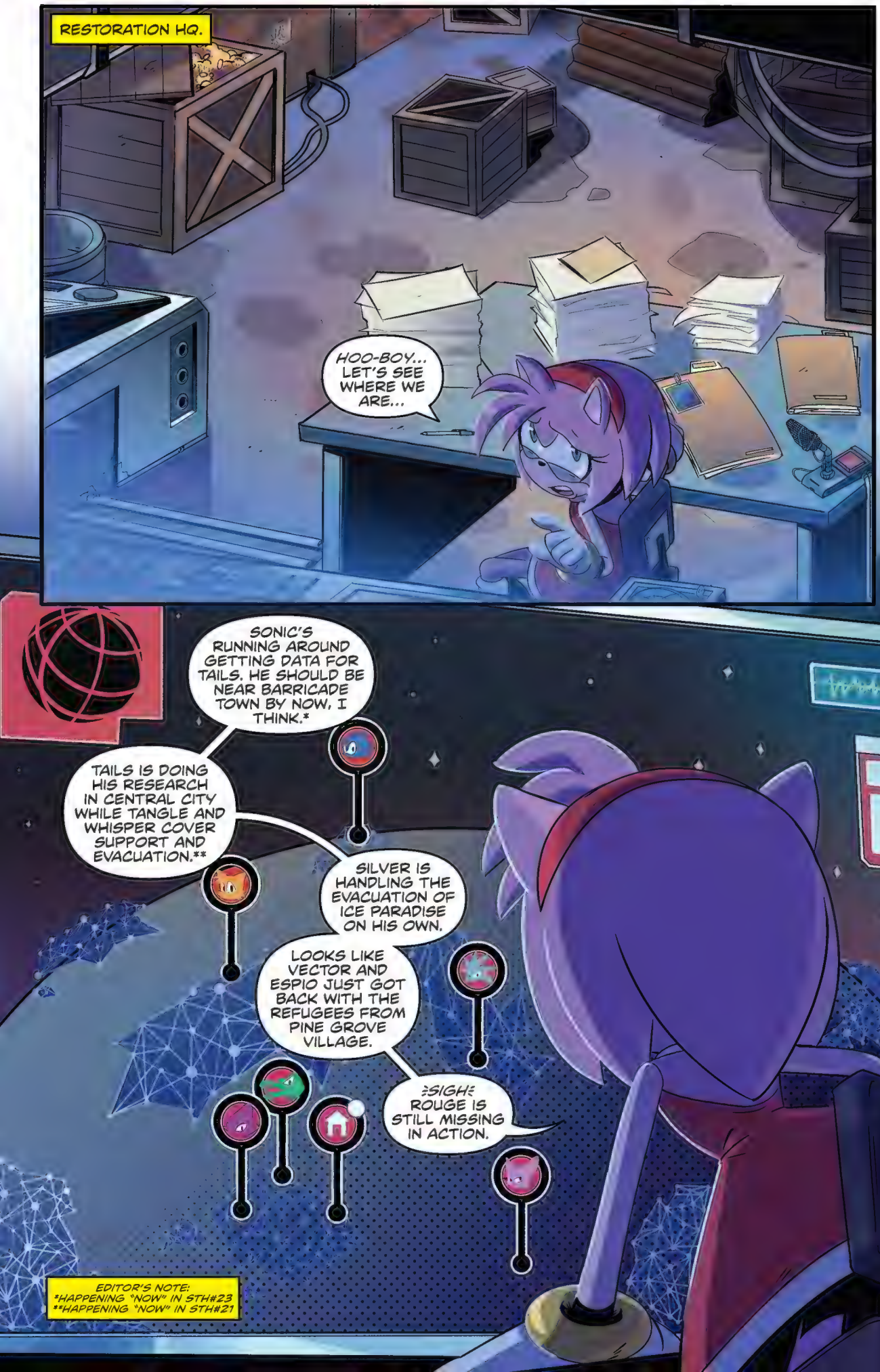
TAILS! WE'RE AIRBORNE! C'MON!
THANK YOU FOR ALL YOUR HARD WORK. YOU DESERVED BETTER.
KOOM!

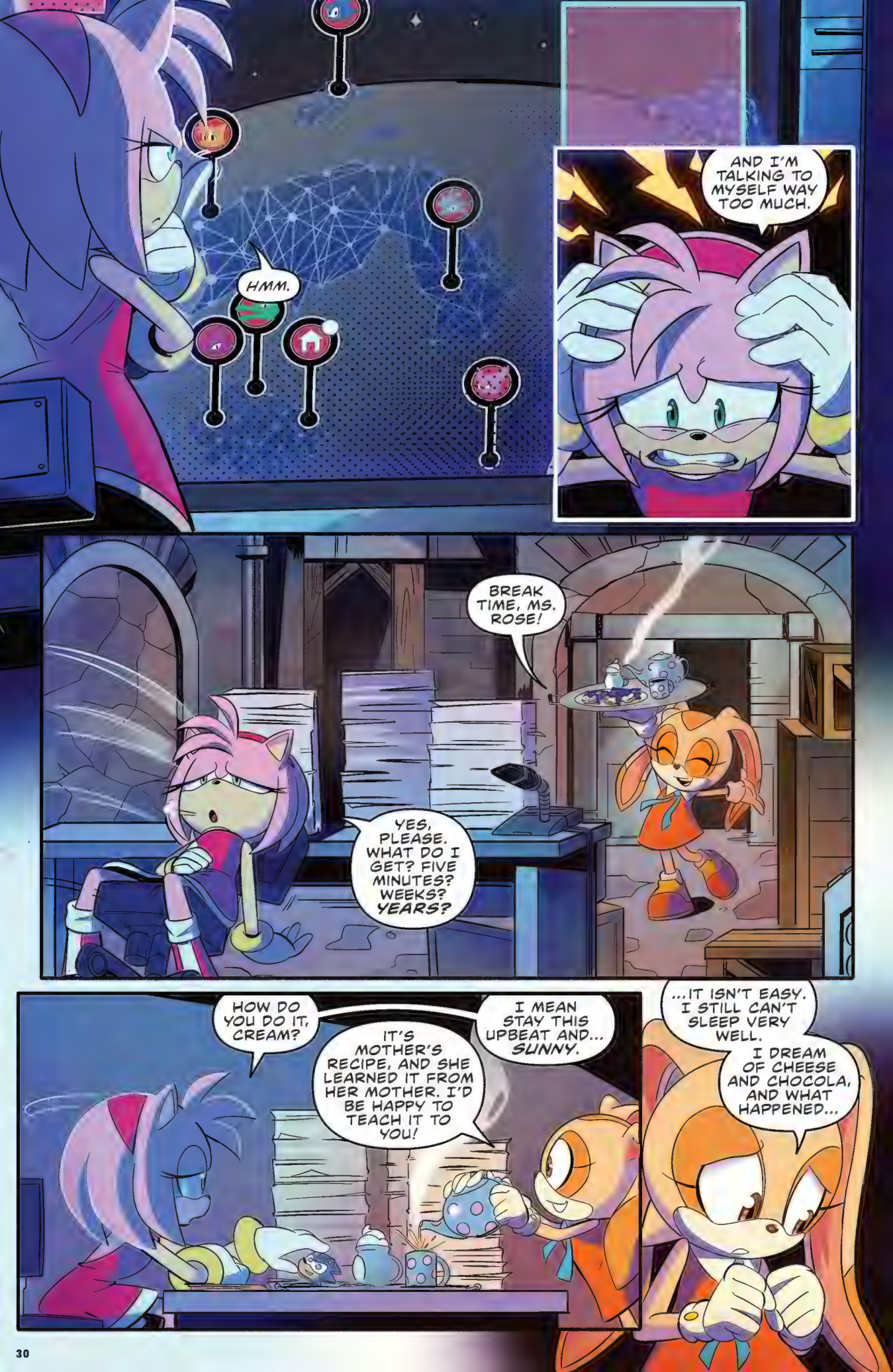
WAIT... WHERE ARE THE OTHER SHUTTLES? WE DIDN'T HAVE MANY, BUT...
W-WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?
WE'RE ON THE ONLY ONE THAT MADE IT OUT.
RESTORATION HQ HAS FALLEN, AND ALMOST EVERYONE WITH IT.

ART BY NATHALIE FOURDRAINE

ART BY RYAN JAMPOLE

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG #22


RESTORATION HQ.
HOO-BOY... LET'S SEE WHERE WE ARE...
SONIC'S RUNNING AROUND GETTING DATA FOR TAILS. HE SHOULD BE NEAR BARRICADE TOWN BY NOW, I THINK.*
TAILS IS DOING HIS RESEARCH IN CENTRAL CITY WHILE TANGLE AND WHISPER COVER SUPPORT AND EVACUATION.**
SILVER IS HANDLING THE EVACUATION OF ICE PARADISE ON HIS OWN.
LOOKS LIKE VECTOR AND ESPIO JUST GOT BACK WITH THE REFUGEES FROM PINE GROVE VILLAGE.
=SIGH= ROUGE IS STILL MISSING IN ACTION.
EDITOR'S NOTE:
*HAPPENING "NOW" IN STH#23
**HAPPENING "NOW" IN STH#21

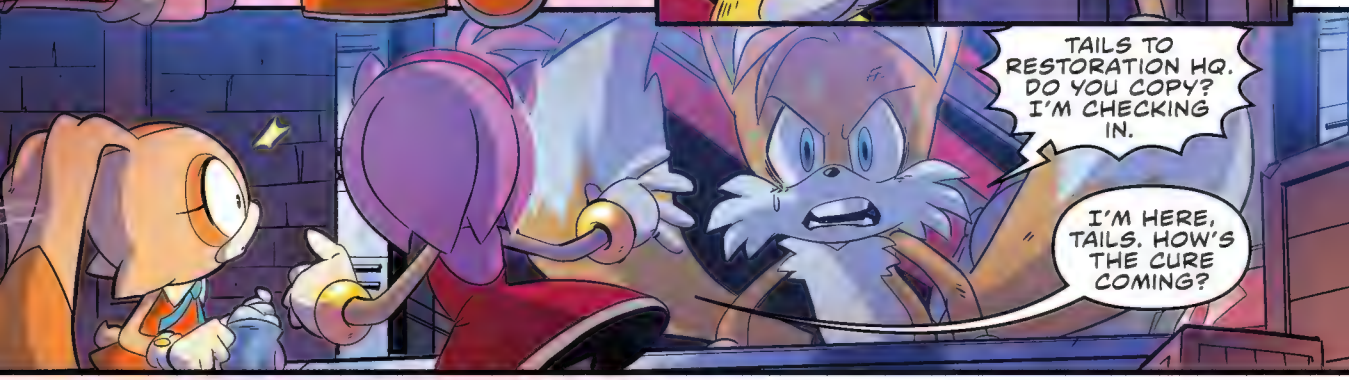

HMM.
AND I'M TALKING TO MYSELF WAY TOO MUCH.
BREAK TIME, MS. ROSE!
YES, PLEASE. WHAT DO I GET? FIVE MINUTES? WEEKS? YEARS?
HOW DO YOU DO IT, CREAM?
IT'S MOTHER'S RECIPE, AND SHE LEARNED IT FROM HER MOTHER. I'D BE HAPPY TO TEACH IT TO YOU!
I MEAN STAY THIS UPBEAT AND... SUNNY.
...IT ISN'T EASY. I STILL CAN'T SLEEP VERY WELL.
I DREAM OF CHEESE AND CHOCOLA, AND WHAT HAPPENED...

BUT I KNOW MOTHER IS AFRAID, TOO. I SEE EVERYONE HIDING HERE IS JUST AS SCARED. AND THAT SPREADS JUST LIKE THE METAL VIRUS.
SO I'M GONNA BE AS BRAVE AS CHEESE WAS! I'M GONNA PUT ON THE BIGGEST SMILE I CAN AND SHARE IT WITH EVERYONE!

AND I CAN DO THAT BECAUSE OF YOU. YOU'RE A HERO, AND AN ADVENTURER, AND YOU NEVER GIVE UP! YOU AND MR. SONIC AND ALL OUR FRIENDS WILL FIND A WAY TO SAVE US.
SO WHY BE SAD WHEN I KNOW THINGS WILL BE OKAY IN THE END?

YOU'RE MY HERO TOO, CREAM. THANK YOU SO MUCH.

NOW THEN—HOW DO YOU TAKE YOUR TEA?
RIGHT NOW? PLAIN'S FINE. I JUST NEED SOMETHING TO KEEP ME UP.


TAILS TO RESTORATION HQ. DO YOU COPY? I'M CHECKING IN.
I'M HERE, TAILS. HOW'S THE CURE COMING?

MEANWHILE, ON LOST HEX...
WE'VE BEEN GRANTED A GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY.
EGGMAN'S NEWEST PATSY HAS INVITED US INTO HIS BASE. HE EXPECTS US TO FIX THE CRISIS ON THE WORLD BELOW.
WE WILL ACCEPT HIS HOSPITALITY AND THEN *PUNISH* HIM FOR IT.
UNLESS, Y'KNOW, THIS IS ANOTHER TRAP. I'D RATHER NOT BE EGGMAN'S SLAVE AGAIN, 'KAY? THANKS.
YOU DARE?
WE UNDERESTIMATED THE DOCTOR THE FIRST TIME. THIS TIME WE ARE PREPARED. WE WILL PUNISH HIM FOR OUR HUMILIATION.
WE WILL DESTROY SONIC FOR DEFEATING US. AND WE WILL GRIND THEIR WORLD TO DUST IN RETRIBUTION.

THANK YOU FOR THE REFRESHMENTS. I'D LOVE TO RELAX WITH YOU, BUT I SHOULD GET BACK TO WORK.
ME TOO.
QUIT SHOVIN'!
FROGGY?! WHERE ARE YOU?!
IS THIS ALL THE SPACE THEY HAVE?
WE DON'T HAVE ENOUGH ROOM FOR EVERYONE...
I SAID BACK OFF, MACK!

UNIT'S DESIGNATION IS NOT "MACK." IT IS GEMERL.
I DON'T CARE IF IT WERE "KING OF EVERYTHING"! YOU AIN'T THROWIN' CHARMY OUT!
YOU HAVE BROUGHT IN A ZOMBOT. HE IS A PATHOGENIC THREAT TO CREAM. HE MUST BE REMOVED.
HE GOT INFECTED BY BEIN' A HERO!
I DIDN'T CARRY THIS CONTAINMENT BUBBLE EVERY-WHERE AND TRACK HIM DOWN JUST FOR YOU TO THROW HIM OUT!
THE CHAOTIX DON'T ABANDON THEIR OWN! I'LL LOOK AFTER HIM! AND I'LL HAVE AN EASIER TIME WITHOUT YOU BREATHING DOWN MY NECK!
THIS UNIT DOES NOT BREATHE.
YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN!

GEMERL! IT'S OKAY!
NEGATIVE. CHARMY BEE IS A THREAT TO YOUR HEALTH.

WE TALKED ABOUT THIS, REMEMBER?*
AFFIRMATIVE. CHARMY BEE IS A VICTIM. BUT...
MR. VECTOR AND MR. ESPIO WILL TAKE GOOD CARE OF HIM.
THEY WON'T LET ANYONE GET SICK FROM HIM.
*STH #18.

I UNDERSTAND YOUR CONCERN, BUT VECTOR HAS A SOLID PLAN.
WE'LL SECURELY STORE CHARMY IN TAILS'S LAB ALONGSIDE OMEGA.
ONCE TAILS HAS FOUND THE CURE, CHARMY WILL BE IMMEDIATELY ACCESSIBLE.
THAT SOUNDS LIKE A WONDERFUL PLAN!
IT IS... ACCEPTABLE.

DON'T BE DISCOURAGED. YOU'LL LEARN TO THINK LIKE US ONE DAY.
ILLOGICALLY AND SELF-DESTRUCTIVELY?
ER... NO...

SHEESH, NOT MUCH ROOM TO MOVE, HUH? IS THIS INCH TAKEN?
IT'S FINE.
I'VE BEEN HERE FOR A WHILE. YOU?
J-JUST GOT IN FROM PINE GROVE VILLAGE.
NEVER BEEN.
I-IT WAS N-NICE...
I'M SURE IT WAS.
I'M FROM GLASS HILL. EGGMAN DIDN'T COME ANYWHERE NEAR US. IT WAS ALL ZOMBOTS FROM OTHER PLACES THAT JUST WANDERED INTO TOWN AND...
HEY! ARE YOU OKAY?
I-I'M S-S-SORRY...
...I... I JUST... D-DIDN'T WANT TO BE ALONE...

ZOMBOT! IT'S A ZOMBOT!
AHHH!
NOO!
HELP!
EVERYONE STAY CALM! DON'T-OOF!
LOOK OUT, CREAM!
KRIK
LEMME THROUGH! IT'S GONNA-
NO! CHARMY!

CHNK
CRASH
AHHH! RUN! HELP!
AWOOGA
AWOOGA
MOTHER?!

AWOOGA AWOOGA AWOOGA
...OH NO...
ALL PILOTS TO YOUR SHUTTLES. PREP FOR IMMEDIATE TAKE-OFF!
RESTORATION HQ HAS BEEN COMPROMISED! I'M INITIATING A FULL EVAC!
ALL FIELD TEAMS! WE–
CLANG
PIKO

HOW BAD IS IT?
TEN PERCENT INFECTION AND GROWING EXPONENTIALLY. I CANNOT CONTAIN ACTIVE ZOMBOTS.
GRAB OMEGA AND GET TO THE LAUNCH BAY! SCAN EVERYONE WHO TRIES TO GET IN!
NEGATIVE. I MUST PROTECT CREAM. I LOST HER WHEN I WAS ATTACKED. I MUST...
YOU'RE THE FASTEST ONE HERE, AND WE'LL NEED TAILS TO REBUILD OMEGA LATER TO PROTECT EVERYONE.
GET OMEGA. GET TO THE SHUTTLES. I'LL FIND CREAM AND BRING HER RIGHT TO YOU.
ORDERS ACKNOWLEDGED.

CREAM! WE'VE GOT TO GO!
PIKO
PIKO

MUH... MUH... MUH...
...MOTHER!
MS. ROSE! PLEASE! GET MY LITTLE GIRL TO SAFETY!
PIKO
THANK YOU.
NO! MOTHER! NO!

NO! GO BACK! GO BACK!
GEMERL?
MISSION OBJECTIVES COMPLETE. SCANNING... YOU ARE BOTH FREE OF INFECTION.
G-GO BACK... PLEASE...
WHERE ARE THE OTHER PILOTS?
ONLY ONE MADE IT THROUGH. NOT THAT MANY OF THE REFUGEES MADE IT, EITHER.
GO FIND YOUR SEAT. I'LL BE WITH YOU IN JUST A SECOND, OKAY?

SCAN COMPLETE. EVERYONE WITHIN IS INFECTED TO SOME DEGREE.
ALL RIGHT. LET'S CLOSE IT UP BEFORE...
OH, NO, YOU DON'T!
I SWEAR, KID. YOU'RE *SUCH* A PAIN IN MY TAIL.
VECTOR—!

VECTOR IS COMPROMISED. IMMEDIATE QUARANTINE REQUIRED.
YEAH-YEAH-YEAH. I GUESS THIS IS WHAT I GET FOR LOOKIN' AFTER MY OWN.
I'LL BEAT 'EM BACK! CLOSE UP THE DOOR BEHIND ME!
HEY, ESPIO, YOU'RE LEAD DETECTIVE NOW.
CLANG

VECTOR IS... VERY STRONG.
AS A ZOMBOT, HE WILL BREAK DOWN THE DOORS SOON.
:SNIFF: Y-YOU'RE RIGHT. WE NEED TO GO.
ESPIO... C'MON. WE'VE GOT TO ESCAPE.
R-ROGER THAT...
WHOOSH

SOON— CENTRAL CITY BAY.
C'MON, PEOPLE! OUR RIDE IS HERE! HUSTLE! HUSTLE! HUSTLE!
TAILS! WE'RE AIRBORNE! C'MON!
BOOM

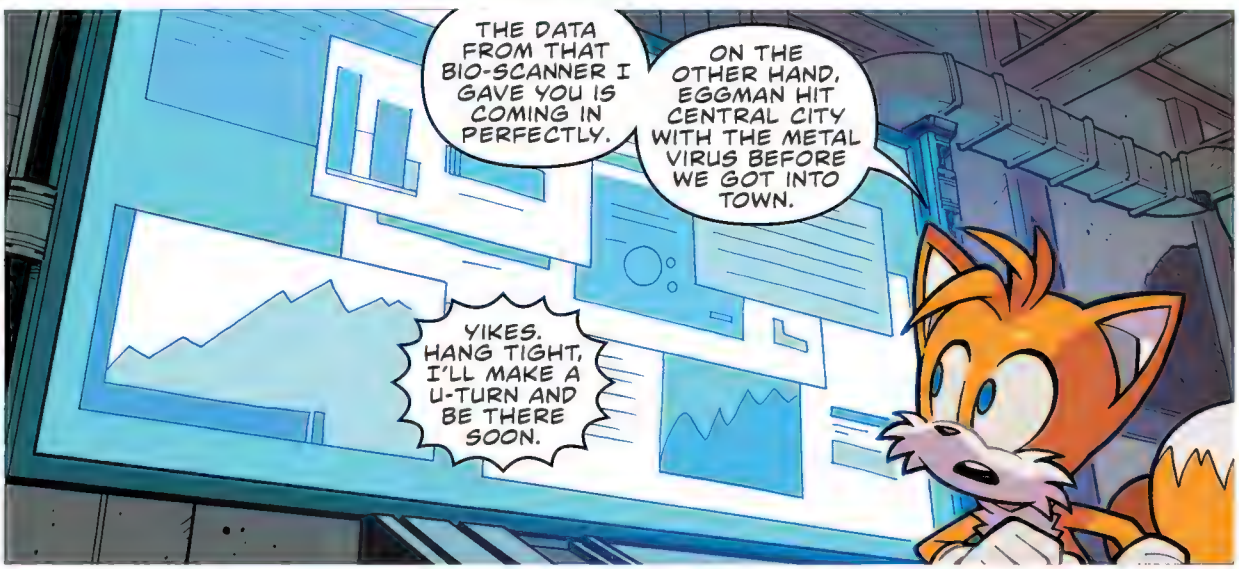
WAIT... WHERE ARE THE OTHER SHUTTLES? WE DIDN'T HAVE MANY, BUT...
WE'RE ON THE ONLY ONE THAT MADE IT OUT.
W-WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?
RESTORATION HQ HAS FALLEN, AND ALMOST EVERYONE WITH IT.
AUGH! NO-NO-NO! EVEN IF THE UPLOAD WAS INCOMPLETE, I COULD'VE STILL DONE SOMETHING IN MY LAB THERE!
YOU MEAN THE DATA FOR THE CURE? IT'S...?
GONE! THE ZOMBOTS TRASHED EVERYTHING!
OUR ONLY HOPE NOW IS THAT SONIC GETS BACK WITH HIS DATA ANALYZER INTACT.
JEWEL? YEAH, I CAN HEAR—SLOW DOWN. WHAT'S HAPPENING?

ART BY NATHALIE FOURDRAINE

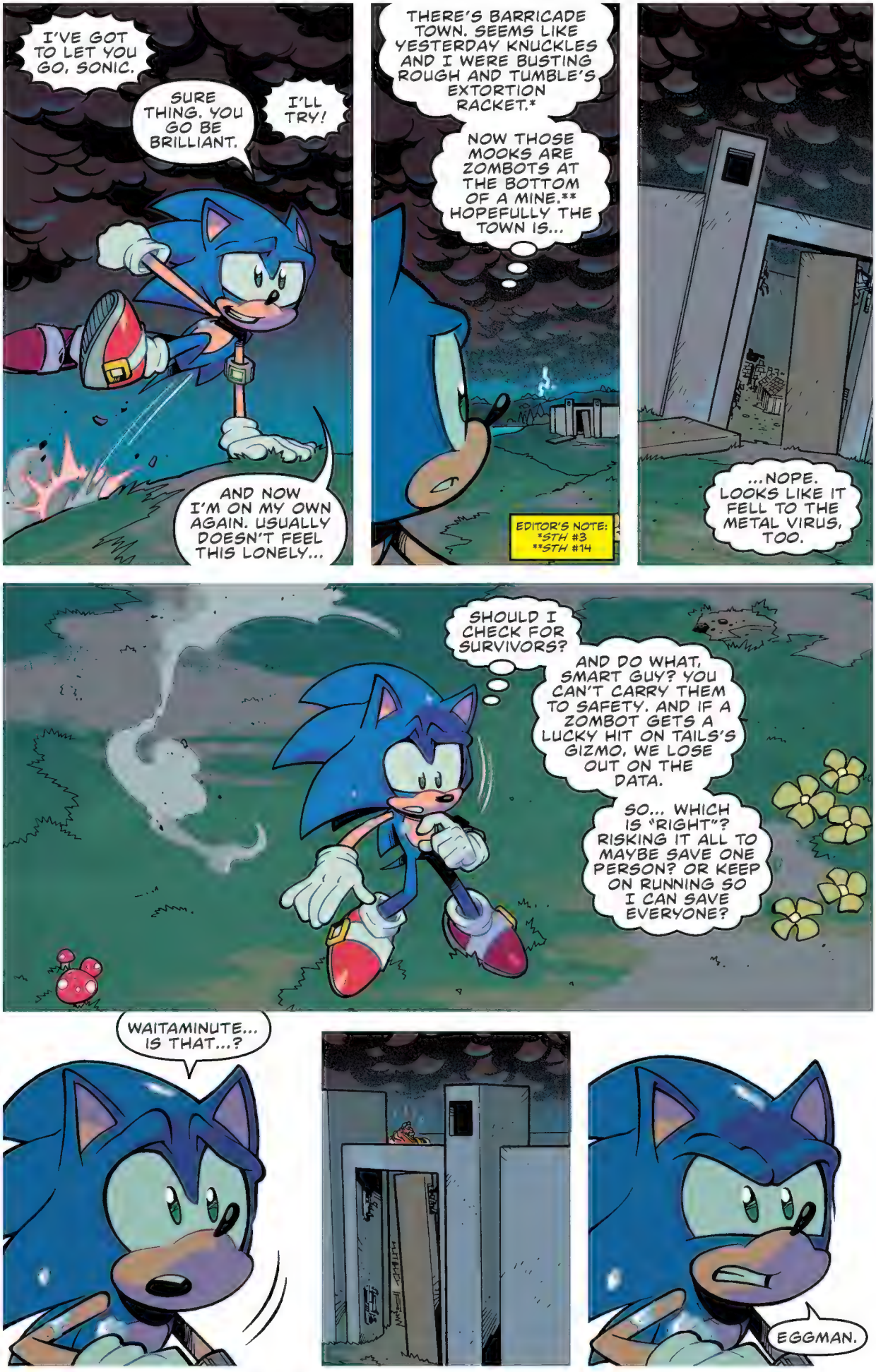
ART BY PRISCILLA TRAMONTANO

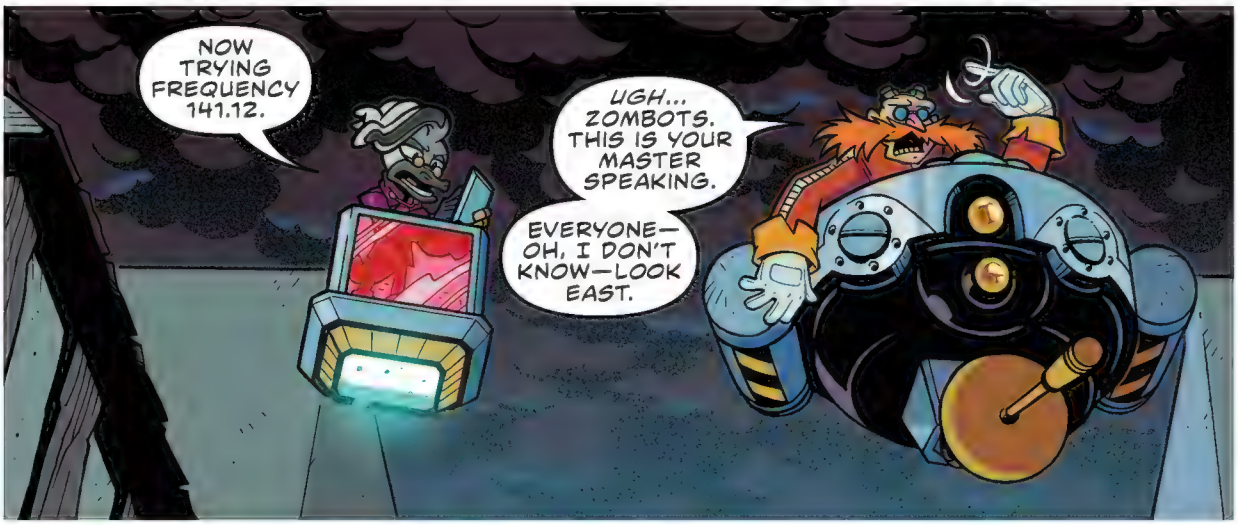
SONIC THE HEDGEHOG #23

YO, TAILS! YOU THERE?
I'M HERE! WHERE ARE YOU?
I'M NOT FAR OUTSIDE OF BARRICADE TOWN.
EVERYTHING GOING WELL ON YOUR END?
YES AND VERY MUCH NO.

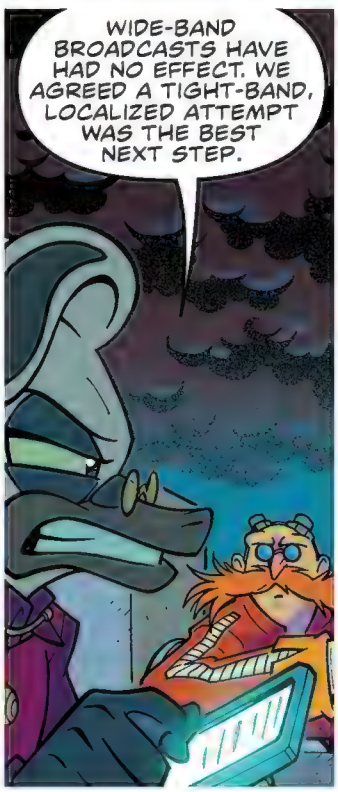

THE DATA FROM THAT BIO-SCANNER I GAVE YOU IS COMING IN PERFECTLY.
ON THE OTHER HAND, EGGMAN HIT CENTRAL CITY WITH THE METAL VIRUS BEFORE WE GOT INTO TOWN.
YIKES. HANG TIGHT, I'LL MAKE A U-TURN AND BE THERE SOON.

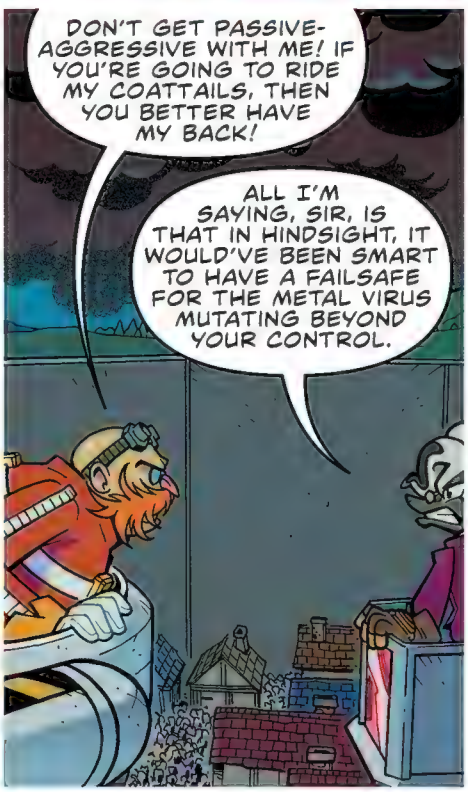
NO-NO-NO! YOU KEEP RUNNING!
WE NEED YOUR SPEED DATA. IT MAY BE THE ONLY KEY TO FINDING A CURE! PLUS, IT'LL BE A BACKUP IN CASE SOMETHING HAPPENS ON MY END.
GOTCHA. STILL, STAY SAFE.
THANKS. I SHOULD BE FINE.


I'VE GOT TO LET YOU GO, SONIC.
SURE THING. YOU GO BE BRILLIANT.
I'LL TRY!
AND NOW I'M ON MY OWN AGAIN. USUALLY DOESN'T FEEL THIS LONELY...
THERE'S BARRICADE TOWN. SEEMS LIKE YESTERDAY KNUCKLES AND I WERE BUSTING ROUGH AND TUMBLE'S EXTORTION RACKET.*
NOW THOSE MOOKS ARE ZOMBOTS AT THE BOTTOM OF A MINE.** HOPEFULLY THE TOWN IS...
EDITOR'S NOTE: *STH #3 **STH #14
...NOPE. LOOKS LIKE IT FELL TO THE METAL VIRUS, TOO.
SHOULD I CHECK FOR SURVIVORS?
AND DO WHAT, SMART GUY? YOU CAN'T CARRY THEM TO SAFETY. AND IF A ZOMBOT GETS A LUCKY HIT ON TAILS'S GIZMO, WE LOSE OUT ON THE DATA.
SO... WHICH IS "RIGHT"? RISKING IT ALL TO MAYBE SAVE ONE PERSON? OR KEEP ON RUNNING SO I CAN SAVE EVERYONE?
WAITAMINUTE... IS THAT...?
EGGMAN.


NOW TRYING FREQUENCY 141.12.
UGH... ZOMBOTS. THIS IS YOUR MASTER SPEAKING.
EVERYONE—OH, I DON'T KNOW—LOOK EAST.

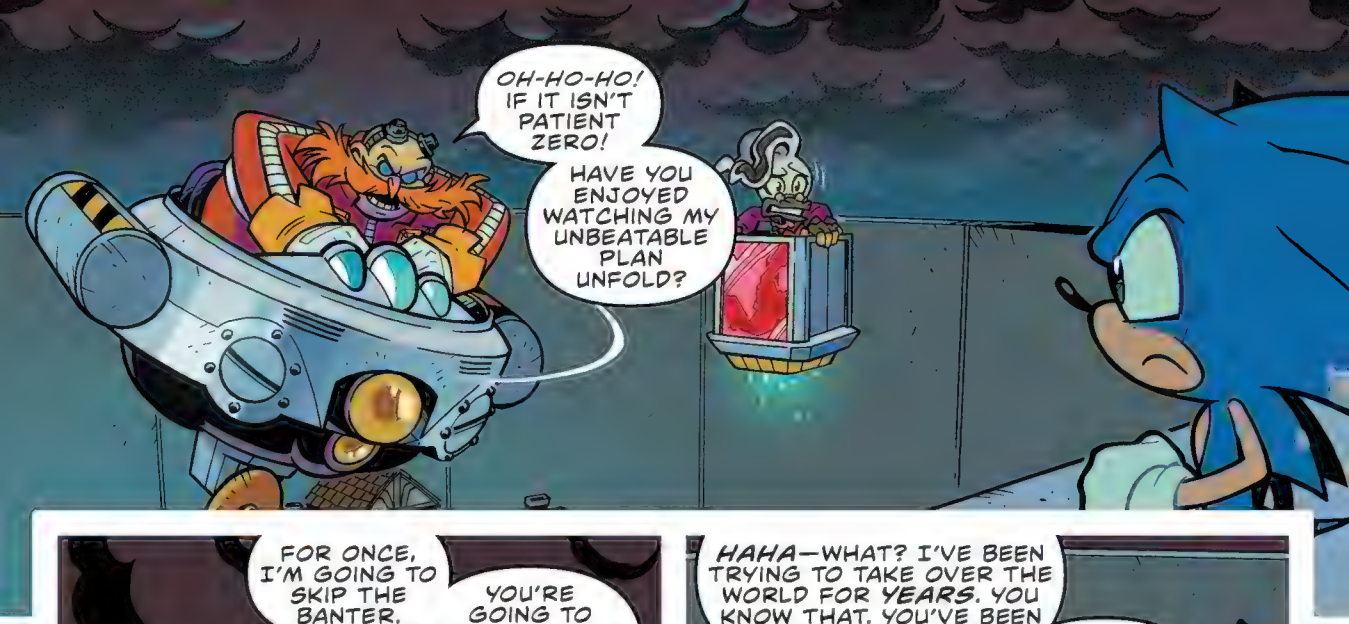
NOW TRYING FREQUENCY 141.13.
ARGH! THIS IS SO TEDIOUS! I SHOULD'VE RIGGED AN AUTOMATED VERSION TO PLAY FROM THE FACESHIP!


WIDE-BAND BROADCASTS HAVE HAD NO EFFECT. WE AGREED A TIGHT-BAND, LOCALIZED ATTEMPT WAS THE BEST NEXT STEP.


DON'T GET PASSIVE-AGGRESSIVE WITH ME! IF YOU'RE GOING TO RIDE MY COATTAILS, THEN YOU BETTER HAVE MY BACK!
ALL I'M SAYING, SIR, IS THAT IN HINDSIGHT, IT WOULD'VE BEEN SMART TO HAVE A FAILSAFE FOR THE METAL VIRUS MUTATING BEYOND YOUR CONTROL.

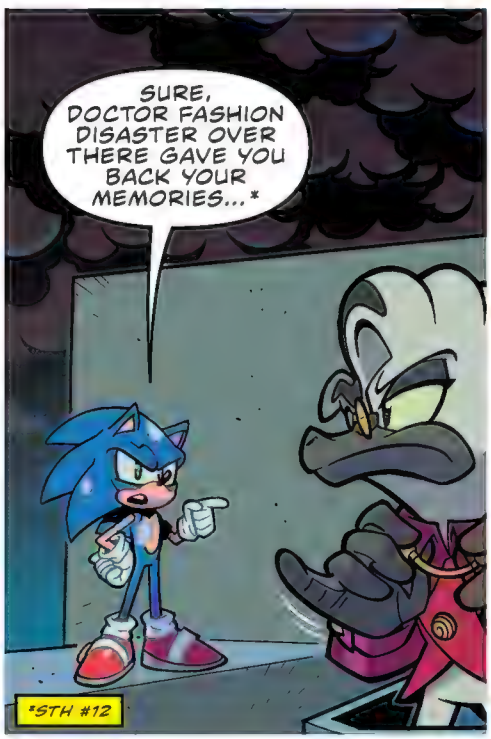
IS IT REALLY MY FAULT WHEN MY CREATIONS EXCEED MY EXPECTATIONS?
HMM... MAYBE WE'RE GOING ABOUT THIS THE WRONG WAY. WHAT ABOUT YOUR SPECIAL GEMSTONE?
THE WARP TOPAZ?
INDEED! YOU'RE ABLE TO WARP SPACE-TIME TO CREATE PORTALS WITH JUST A SMALL ELECTRICAL CHARGE.
IMAGINE WHAT I COULD DO IF I HOOKED IT UP TO THE CHAOS EMERALDS ABOARD THE FACESHIP!
ABSOLUTELY NOT!
WHEN I FOUND IT, THE WARP TOPAZ RESPONDED STRONGLY TO EVEN THE MOST PASSIVE OF ENERGY WAVES!
IN MY EARLY EXPERIMENTS, ANYTHING ABOVE A LIGHT, CONTROLLED CHARGE RESULTED IN EXTREME REALITY ALTERATION.
IT CAN BE A USEFUL TOOL WHEN USED PROPERLY, BUT WHAT YOU'RE PROPOSING IS EXCEEDINGLY DANGEROUS!
IT'LL BE FINE! WE JUST HAVE TO BE CAUTIOUS!
"CAUTIOUS"? YOU ARE ANYTHING BUT CAUTIOUS!
YOU'VE YET TO INOCULATE US TO THE METAL VIRUS!

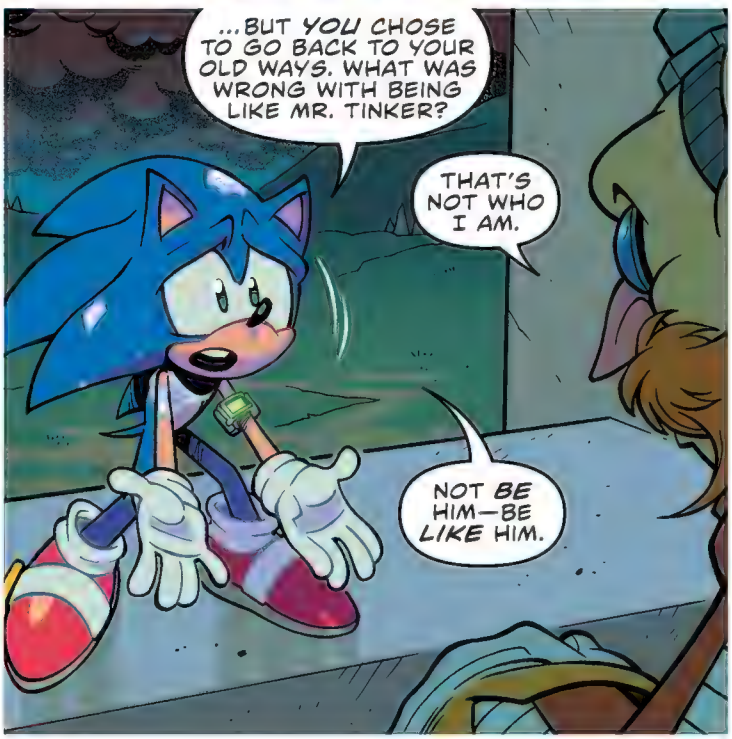
SHOWS WHAT YOU KNOW! THERE IS NO VACCINE!
THEN... BUT... HOW WERE YOU GOING TO PROTECT US FROM INFECTION?
BY NOT TOUCHING THE ZOMBOTS. DUH.
WHAT IF THERE WAS A SPILL ON THE FACESHIP?! OR A MISHAP IN THE FIELD?! OR IT MUTATES AND BECOMES AIRBORNE?!
YOU'VE EXCEEDED MY THRESHOLD FOR NITPICKING, DOCTOR.
IT'S NOT NITPICKING! IT'S COMMON SENSE!
YOU'LL SHUT YOUR BILL, OR I'LL STAPLE IT SHUT!
AWW, IS THE HONEY-MOON OVER ALREADY?


OH-HO-HO! IF IT ISN'T PATIENT ZERO!
HAVE YOU ENJOYED WATCHING MY UNBEATABLE PLAN UNFOLD?

FOR ONCE, I'M GOING TO SKIP THE BANTER.
YOU'RE GOING TO TELL ME RIGHT HERE, RIGHT NOW—*WHY DID YOU DO IT?*

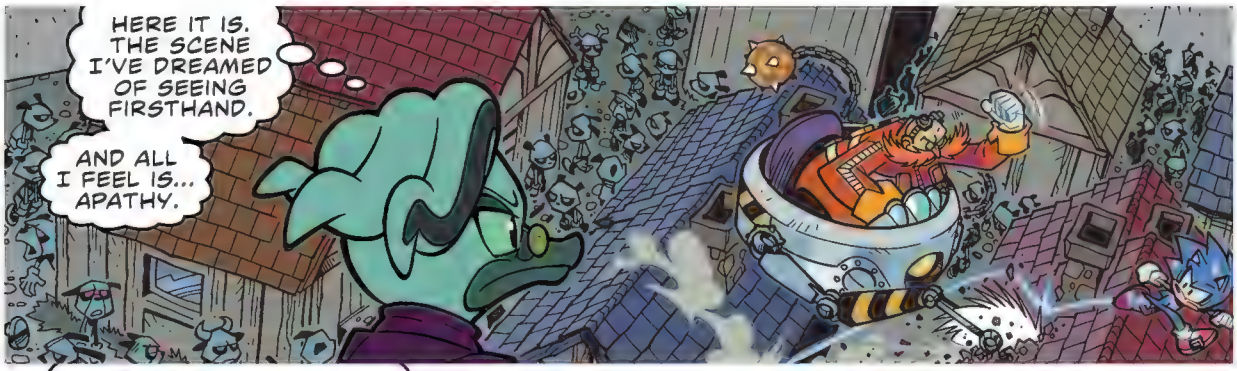
HAHA—WHAT? I'VE BEEN TRYING TO TAKE OVER THE WORLD FOR *YEARS*. YOU KNOW THAT. YOU'VE BEEN UNDERFOOT THE ENTIRE TIME.
I MEAN, GOING BACK TO THE "MAD SCIENTIST" SCHTICK.

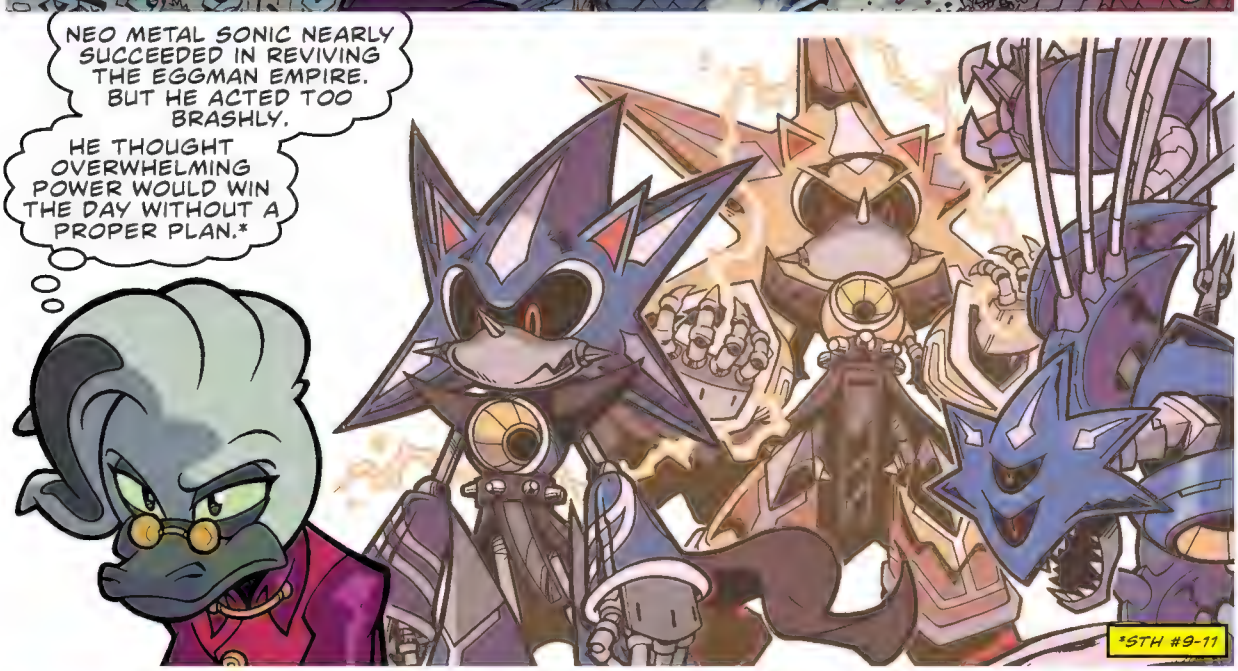

SURE, DOCTOR FASHION DISASTER OVER THERE GAVE YOU BACK YOUR MEMORIES...*
*STH #12

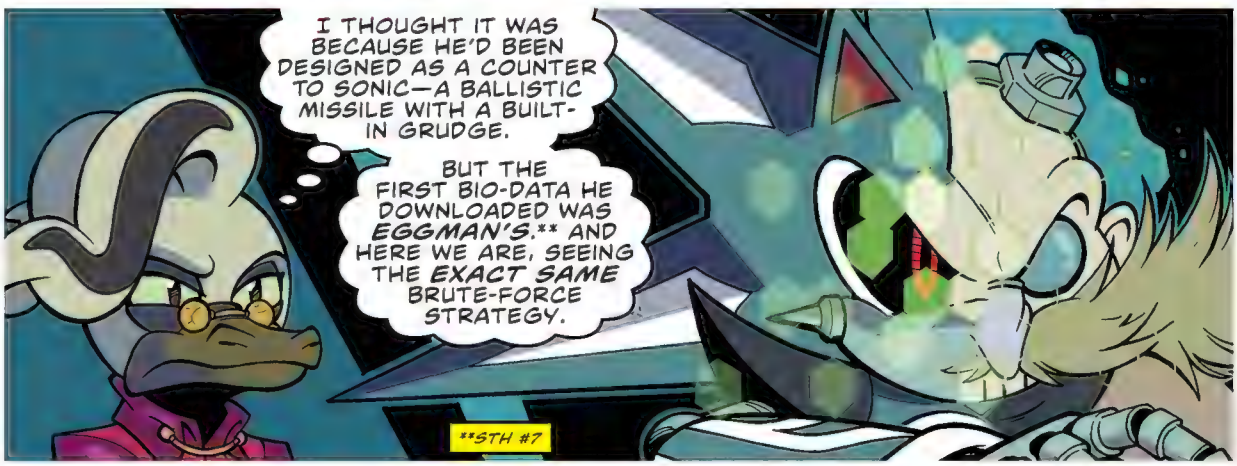

...BUT *YOU* CHOSE TO GO BACK TO YOUR OLD WAYS. WHAT WAS WRONG WITH BEING LIKE MR. TINKER?
THAT'S NOT WHO I AM.
NOT *BE* HIM—BE *LIKE* HIM.

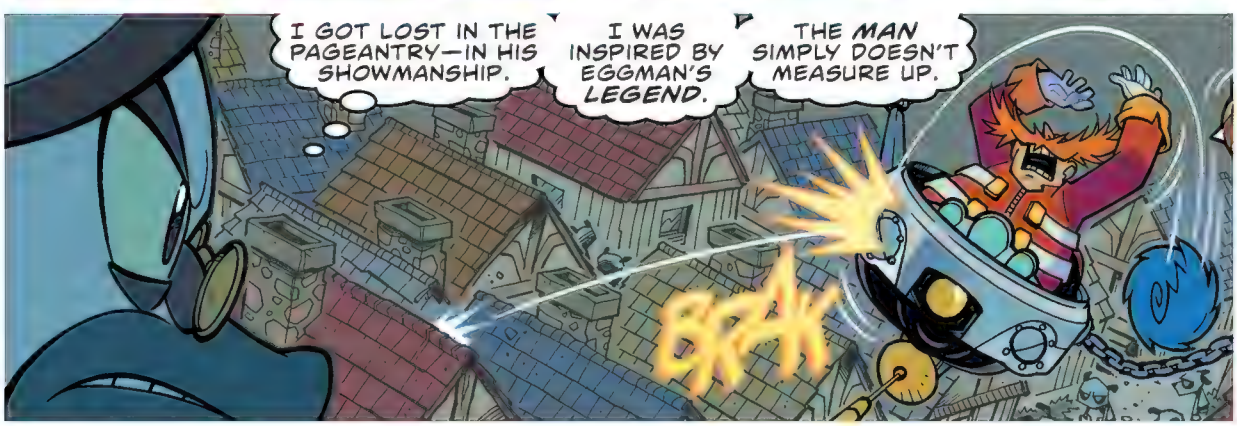
OH, WHAT? YOU WANT ME TO BE A CHARITABLE GOODY TWO-SHOES? FIXING DOORKNOBS AND BUILDING TOYS?
LIVING ON... GRATEFUL SMILES. LISTENING TO CHILDREN'S LAUGHTER, DAY IN, DAY OUT.
MAKING THINGS... PEOPLE NEED... AND...USE...
AHH... THAT LIFE WAS RELAXING. BUT I'M DOING SOMETHING BETTER.
I'M BRINGING PEACE AND UNITY TO THE WORLD, AND PROVIDING IT WITH MY BRILLIANT GUIDANCE.
NO, YOU'RE NOT!
AGREE TO DISAGREE.
YOU KNOW, WE'RE NOT THAT DIFFERENT, YOU AND I. WE BOTH HAVE OUR OWN STYLES THAT WE WON'T CHANGE.
YEAH, BUT YOURS IS EVIL AND MINE'S NOT!
AGAIN— AGREE TO DISAGREE.

NNGH... I'M RUNNING OUT OF TIME... AND I'M TOTALLY OUT OF PATIENCE...
YOU'RE GOING TO REVERSE THE METAL VIRUS OR ELSE—
THE METAL VIRUS'S INFECTION HAS SPREAD EXPONENTIALLY! I COULDN'T STOP IT NOW EVEN IF I WANTED TO!
"OR ELSE" WHAT? YOU CAN'T STOP ME! NO ONE CAN!
ALL THAT'S LEFT IS TO FIND A WAY TO COMMAND THE ZOMBOTS, AND THEN I WILL FINALLY RULE THE WORLD!
FINE! TAILS WILL HANDLE IT! AND I'LL HANDLE YOU!
HAHAHA! ONE LAST BATTLE BEFORE YOU'RE MY ZOMBOT SLAVE?
ONE LAST BUTT-KICKING BEFORE WE LOCK YOU AWAY FOREVER!


HERE IT IS. THE SCENE I'VE DREAMED OF SEEING FIRSTHAND.
AND ALL I FEEL IS... APATHY.


NEO METAL SONIC NEARLY SUCCEEDED IN REVIVING THE EGGMAN EMPIRE. BUT HE ACTED TOO BRASHLY.
HE THOUGHT OVERWHELMING POWER WOULD WIN THE DAY WITHOUT A PROPER PLAN.*
*STH #9-11

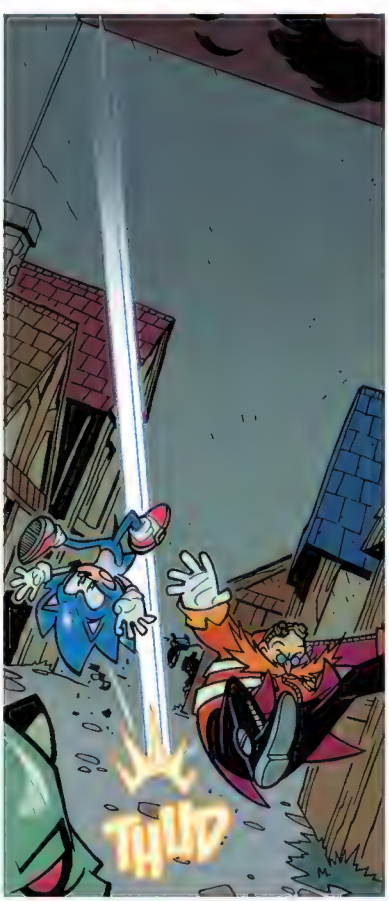

I THOUGHT IT WAS BECAUSE HE'D BEEN DESIGNED AS A COUNTER TO SONIC—A BALLISTIC MISSILE WITH A BUILT-IN GRUDGE.
BUT THE FIRST BIO-DATA HE DOWNLOADED WAS EGGMAN'S.** AND HERE WE ARE, SEEING THE EXACT SAME BRUTE-FORCE STRATEGY.
**STH #7


I GOT LOST IN THE PAGEANTRY—IN HIS SHOWMANSHIP.
I WAS INSPIRED BY EGGMAN'S LEGEND.
THE MAN SIMPLY DOESN'T MEASURE UP.
BRAK

YOU CAN'T RUN FOREVER, RODENT! YOU'LL TIRE EVENTUALLY, AND THEN MY VIRUS WILL TAKE HOLD!

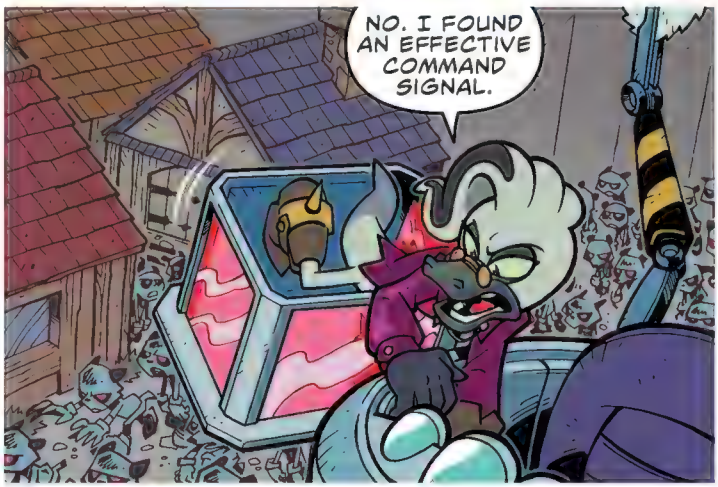
IF YOU'RE SO PROUD OF IT, WHY DON'T YOU TRY IT!
GAK! DON'T TOUCH ME!

WHOA!
GYAH!


THUD

SURE WOULD BE NICE IF YOU HAD A CURE HANDY, HUH?
S-S-STAY BACK! I C-C-C-COMMAND YOU—!

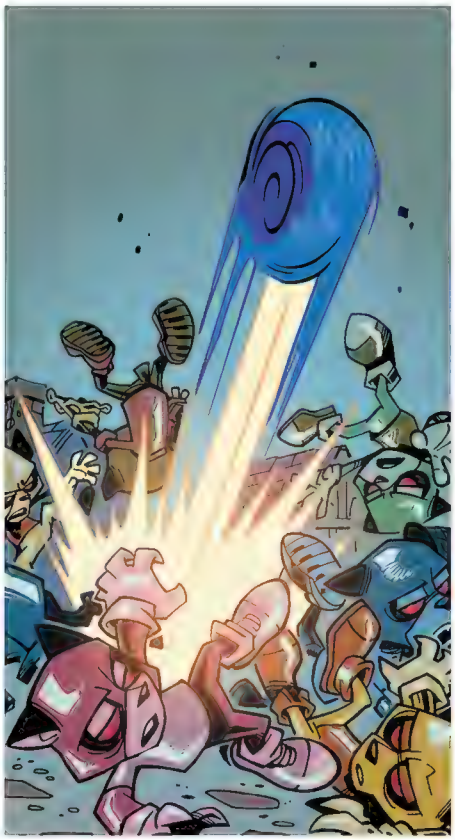
...THAT WORKED...?


NO. I FOUND AN EFFECTIVE COMMAND SIGNAL.

MAYBE I WON'T HAVE TO USE MY OWN PLANS AFTER ALL.
BUT THEN, WHAT WILL *YOU* LEARN FROM THIS?

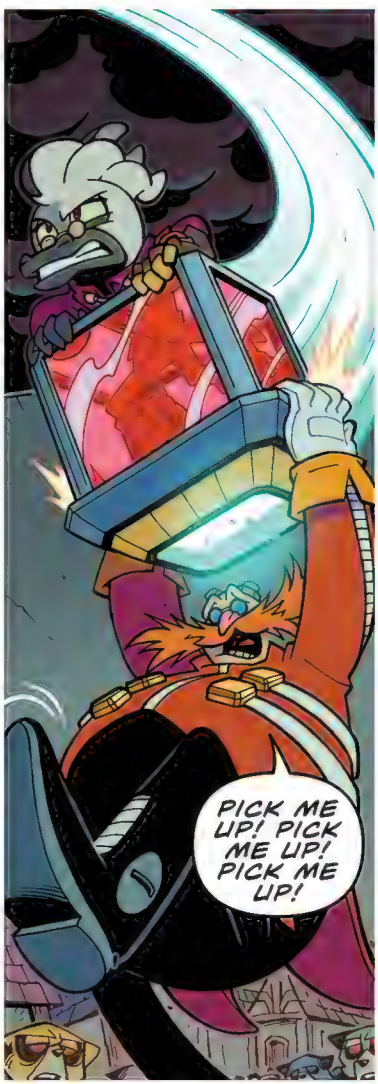
EXCELLENT WORK! NOW UPLOAD THAT FREQUENCY TO THE FACESHIP SO I CAN COMMAND THE ZOMBOTS OF THE WORLD!

NO!

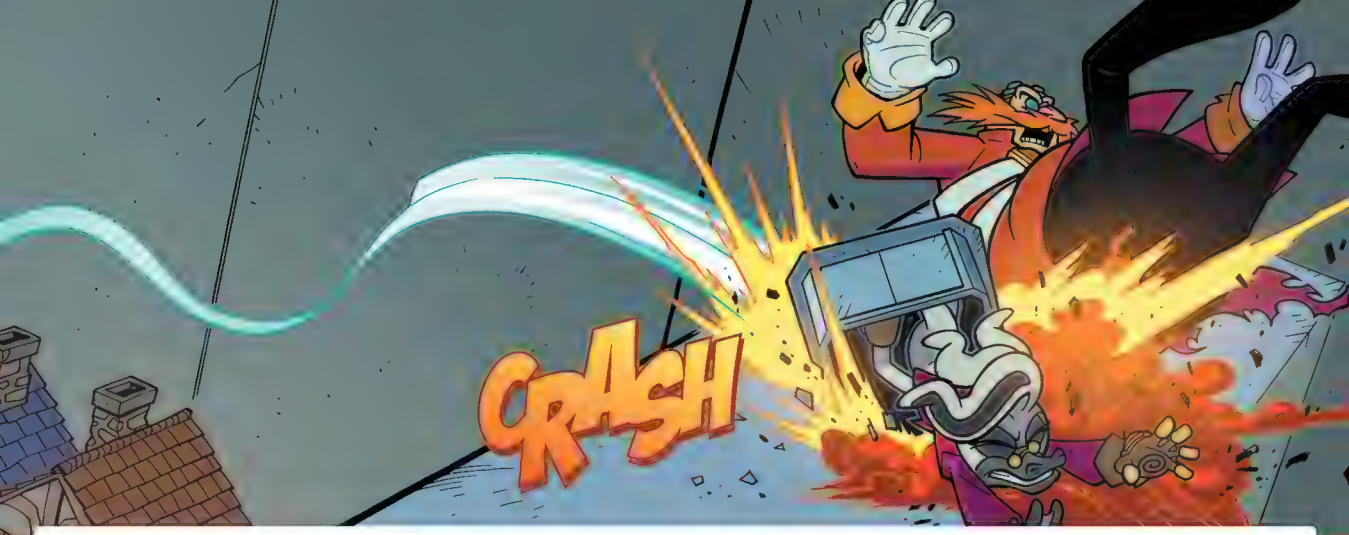


SMASH

NO... ZOMBOT... ARMY... FOR YOU...


PICK ME UP! PICK ME UP! PICK ME UP!

HIGHER! FASTER!
THERE'S TOO MUCH WEIGHT!

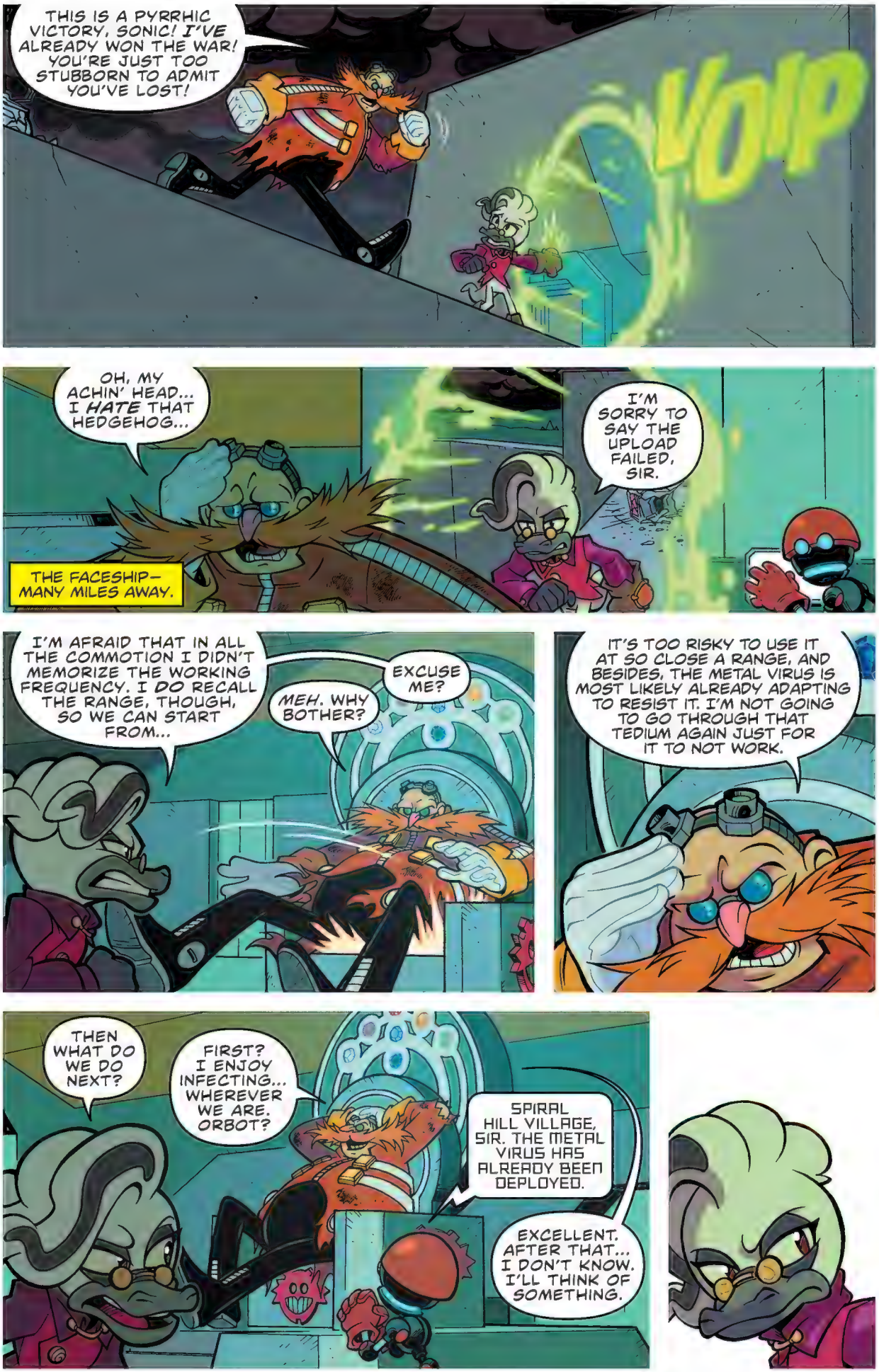

CRASH

SONIC, YOU IDIOT! NOW NOBODY CAN CONTROL THE ZOMBOTS! THEY'LL DESTROY MY FACTORIES ALONG WITH EVERYTHING ELSE!

GEE. DARN. BETTER WORK ON A CURE, HUH?

NEVER! I'LL PAVE OVER THE HORDES IF I HAVE TO!
AS DUBIOUS AS THAT PLAN SOUNDS...

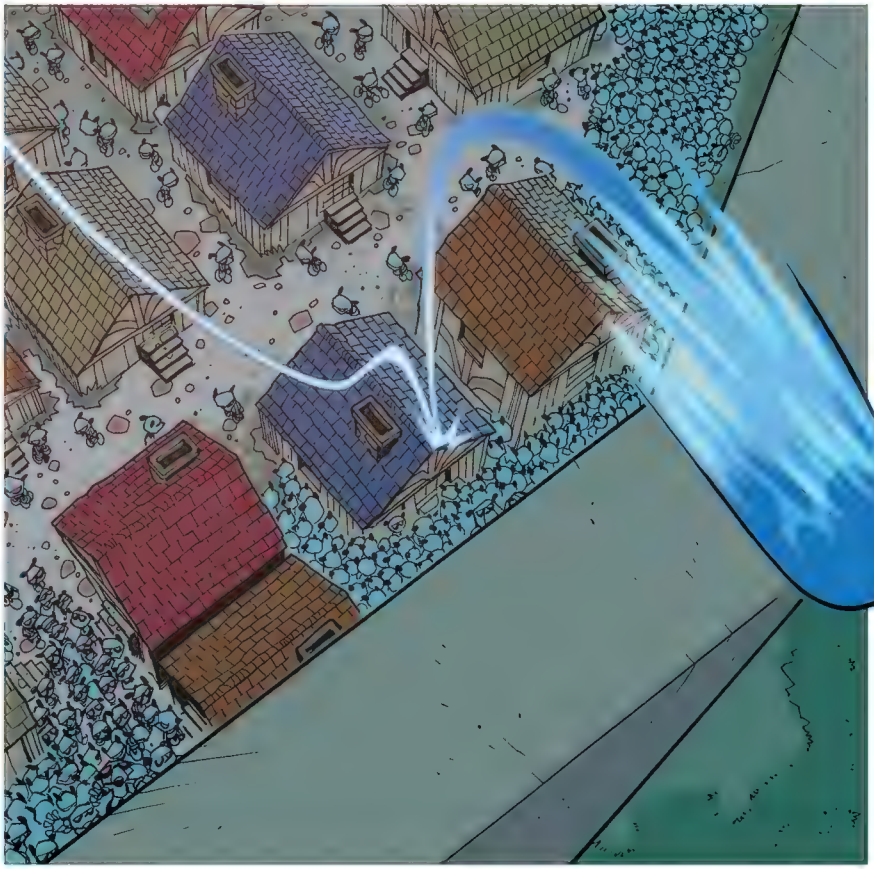
"...I SUGGEST WE TRY SOMETHING ELSE FIRST. LET'S RETREAT FOR NOW."

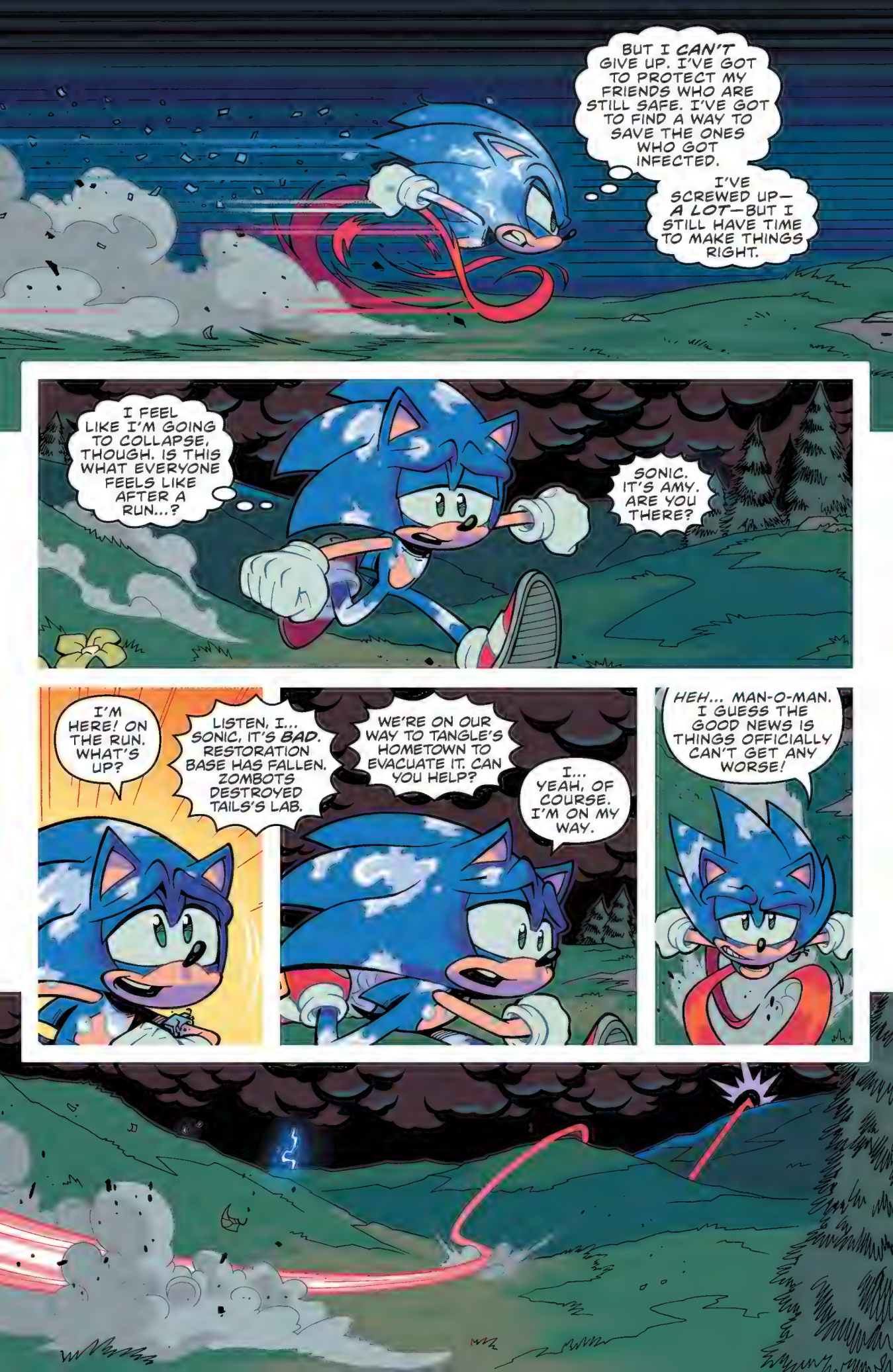

THIS IS A PYRRHIC VICTORY, SONIC! I'VE ALREADY WON THE WAR! YOU'RE JUST TOO STUBBORN TO ADMIT YOU'VE LOST!
VOIP
OH, MY ACHIN' HEAD... I HATE THAT HEDGEHOG...
I'M SORRY TO SAY THE UPLOAD FAILED, SIR.
THE FACESHIP— MANY MILES AWAY.
I'M AFRAID THAT IN ALL THE COMMOTION I DIDN'T MEMORIZE THE WORKING FREQUENCY. I DO RECALL THE RANGE, THOUGH, SO WE CAN START FROM...
MEH. WHY BOTHER?
EXCUSE ME?
IT'S TOO RISKY TO USE IT AT SO CLOSE A RANGE, AND BESIDES, THE METAL VIRUS IS MOST LIKELY ALREADY ADAPTING TO RESIST IT. I'M NOT GOING TO GO THROUGH THAT TEDIUM AGAIN JUST FOR IT TO NOT WORK.
THEN WHAT DO WE DO NEXT?
FIRST? I ENJOY INFECTING... WHEREVER WE ARE. ORBOT?
SPIRAL HILL VILLAGE, SIR. THE METAL VIRUS HAS ALREADY BEEN DEPLOYED.
EXCELLENT. AFTER THAT... I DON'T KNOW. I'LL THINK OF SOMETHING.

OH MAN... I DID EXACTLY WHAT TAILS WARNED ME NOT TO DO...

I DIDN'T PROTECT THE DATA-READER. I HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO PROTECT MY FRIENDS.
I PUT MY FAITH IN THE IDEA EVERYONE HAS A LITTLE GOOD IN THEM, AND EGGMAN'S MADE ME PAY FOR IT EVERY DAY...

BWOSH




BUT I CAN'T GIVE UP. I'VE GOT TO PROTECT MY FRIENDS WHO ARE STILL SAFE. I'VE GOT TO FIND A WAY TO SAVE THE ONES WHO GOT INFECTED.
I'VE SCREWED UP—A LOT—BUT I STILL HAVE TIME TO MAKE THINGS RIGHT.
I FEEL LIKE I'M GOING TO COLLAPSE, THOUGH. IS THIS WHAT EVERYONE FEELS LIKE AFTER A RUN...?
SONIC. IT'S AMY. ARE YOU THERE?
I'M HERE! ON THE RUN. WHAT'S UP?
LISTEN, I... SONIC, IT'S BAD. RESTORATION BASE HAS FALLEN. ZOMBOTS DESTROYED TAILS'S LAB.
WE'RE ON OUR WAY TO TANGLE'S HOMETOWN TO EVACUATE IT. CAN YOU HELP?
I... YEAH, OF COURSE. I'M ON MY WAY.
HEH... MAN-O-MAN. I GUESS THE GOOD NEWS IS THINGS OFFICIALLY CAN'T GET ANY WORSE!

MEANWHILE, ON THE HIDDEN WORLD OF LOST HEX...
WE HAVE BEEN TESTED, MASTER ZIK. EGGMAN USED US AS HIS ENFORCERS. SONIC HUMILIATED US IN BATTLE.
THIS WILL NOT GO UNANSWERED.
BUT VENGEANCE MUST BE EXACT. IT WAS WISE OF YOU TO HAVE US BIDE OUR TIME, LETTING OUR HATRED AND ANGER FESTER.
AND NOW OUR PATIENCE HAS PAID OFF.

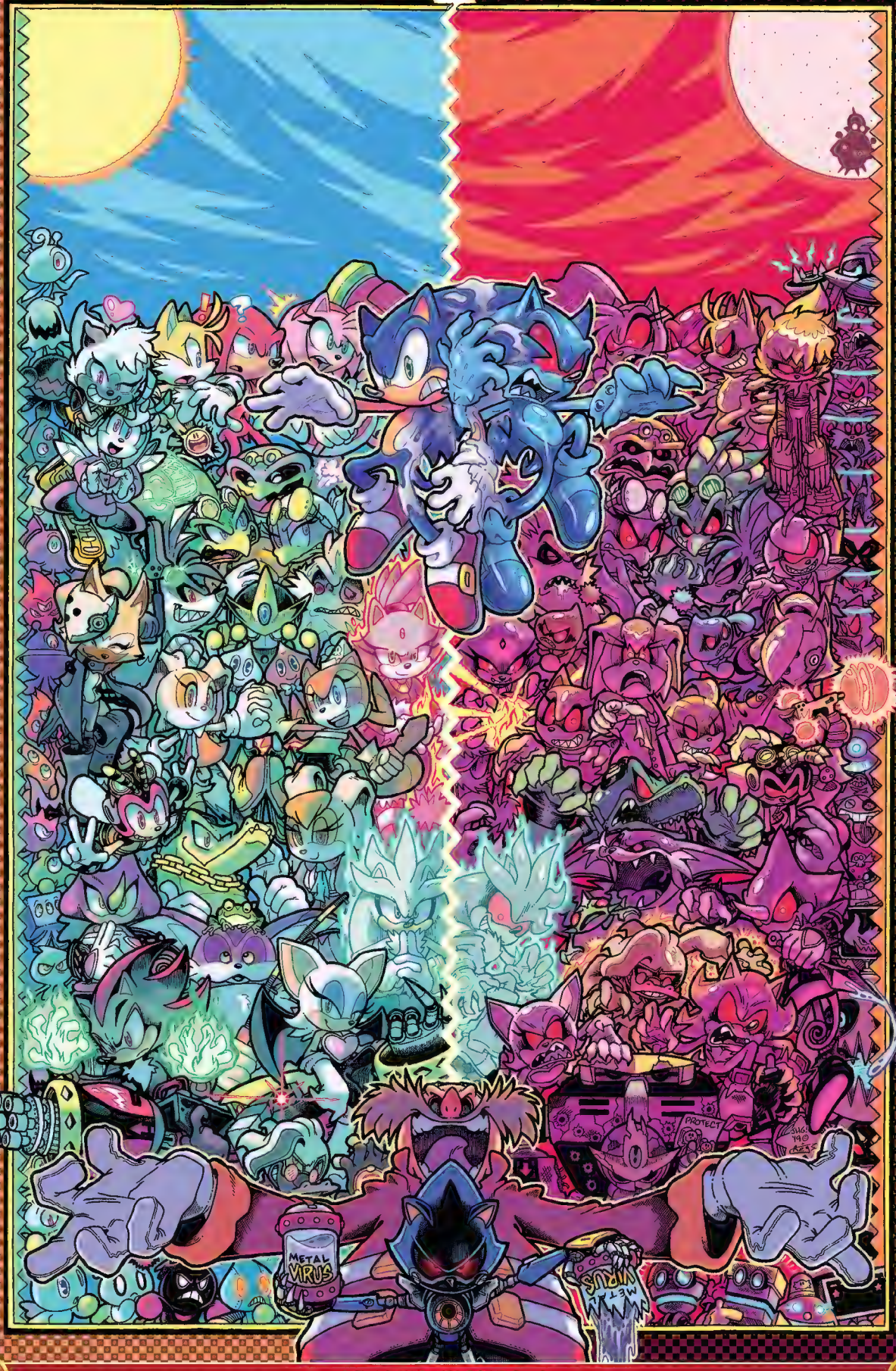
DR. STARLINE.
ZAVOK.
YOU'VE RETURNED SOONER THAN I ANTICIPATED.
YES, WELL, TODAY'S EVENTS HAVE CEMENTED THE FACT YOUR ABILITIES ARE NEEDED.
YOU CAN EXERT YOUR WILL OVER MACHINES, CORRECT?
I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT NEED A DEMON-STRATION.
WHETHER IT'S ONE ROBOT OR ONE HUNDRED, THE DEADLY SIX AND I CAN COMMAND THEM ALL.

WE ARE ALL VERY EAGER TO SEE EGGMAN AGAIN. WHEN CAN WE BEGIN TO SERVE HIM?
...VERY SOON. I JUST NEED TO DO SOME LAST MINUTE PREPARATIONS ON MY END.
WE SHALL WAIT WITH BATED BREATH.
I'LL BE IN TOUCH.
THE NAÏVE FOOL. HE HAS NO IDEA WE WILL TAKE EGGMAN'S UNRULY ARMY AND TURN IT AGAINST HIM.
JUST SO, MASTER ZIK.
WE WILL JOURNEY TO THE LANDS BELOW. WE WILL TAKE COMMAND OF THESE "ZOMBOTS." WE WILL USE THEM TO DESTROY EGGMAN, DESTROY SONIC, AND DESTROY THE WORLD THEY HAVE WARRED OVER FOR SO LONG!
OUR VENGEANCE WILL BE MERCILESS! OUR VICTORY— ABSOLUTE!

THE FILES SAID EGGMAN USED THE CACOPHONOUS CONCH TO ENSLAVE THE ZETI, AND THAT THEY WERE EAGER TO TURN ON HIM.
ZAVOK IS PLANNING TO BETRAY ME THE MINUTE HE STEPS ABOARD.
BUT I'VE DONE MY RESEARCH. AND BEING AN AVID COLLECTOR OF EGGMAN'S PARAPHERNALIA...
...MEANS I'M ALREADY PREPARED.
TAKE NOTE, EGGMAN. THIS IS HOW YOU DO IT.

ART BY NATHALIE FOURDRAINE

ART BY JONATHAN GRAY COLORS BY REGGIE GRAHAM



THE FIRST TIME I CAME TO SPIRAL HILL VILLAGE, IT WAS UNDER ATTACK FROM EGGMAN.*
*STH#4
THINGS HAVEN'T CHANGED MUCH.

LOOKS LIKE THE RESTORATION CREW IS ALREADY HANDLING THE EVACUATION.
ON SECOND THOUGHT— ESPIO NEEDS BACK-UP!
I BETTER CHECK IN WITH AMY AND SEE WHAT I CAN DO.

WHOOSH
YO. THEY HAVE YOU FIGHTING THE WHOLE TOWN BY YOURSELF?
HEH. OUR NUMBERS HAVE GROWN THIN.
AMY AND GEMERL ARE WATCHING THE ESCAPE SHUTTLE. GEMERL IS SCANNING EVERYONE TO MAKE SURE THEY AREN'T INFECTED.
TAILS AND CREAM ARE AIRLIFTING ANYONE THEY CAN FIND.
LAST I HEARD, SILVER WAS MANAGING ICE PARADISE ON HIS OWN.
THAT LEAVES ME, TANGLE, AND WHISPER TO CONTAIN THE ZOMBOTS.
YIKES. WHERE'S VECTOR?

WE FOUND CHARMY. WE THOUGHT WE HAD HIM CONTAINED. I KNEW BETTER. I SHOULDN'T HAVE LET VECTOR BRING HIM BACK TO RESTORATION HQ. IT'S MY FAULT...
NO, MAN, YOU CAN'T...
JUST LIKE I SHOULDN'T HAVE LET YOU CONVINCE ME TO LEAVE EGGMAN IN WINDMILL VILLAGE.
THAT WAS MR. TINKER.
WE HAD NO WAY OF KNOWING STARLINE WOULD TURN HIM BACK INTO EGGMAN.
AND IF WE HAD DEALT WITH HIM THEN, WE WOULDN'T HAVE HAD TO WORRY.
SO—WHAT? WE HAVE TO ASSUME THE WORST ABOUT EVERYONE AND EVERYTHING? SHOW NO MERCY TO ANYONE? NO SECOND CHANCES?
THERE ARE PEOPLE TO SAVE.
RIGHT. SEE YOU AT THE SHUTTLE.

SHUNK

HEY AMY!
SONIC! FASHIONABLY LATE, AS USUAL.

YOU KNOW HOW I LOVE TO MAKE AN ENTRANCE.
WHAT DO YOU NEED ME TO DO?
ESPIO, TANGLE, AND WHISPER ARE KEEPING THE ZOMBOTS DISTRACTED WHILE TAILS AND CREAM FIND PEOPLE.

WE'VE MADE A CHOKE POINT SO GEMERL AND I CAN HANDLE THE ZOMBOTS THAT DO FIND US.
WE'RE NEARLY DONE, BUT ONCE WE PULL BACK TO RETREAT, THE ZOMBOTS ARE GOING TO SWARM US.
SO COVER THE ESCAPE. GOTCHA. I'LL FIND TANGLE AND SEE IF SHE'S GOT ANY IDEAS. IT'S HER TOWN AFTER ALL.

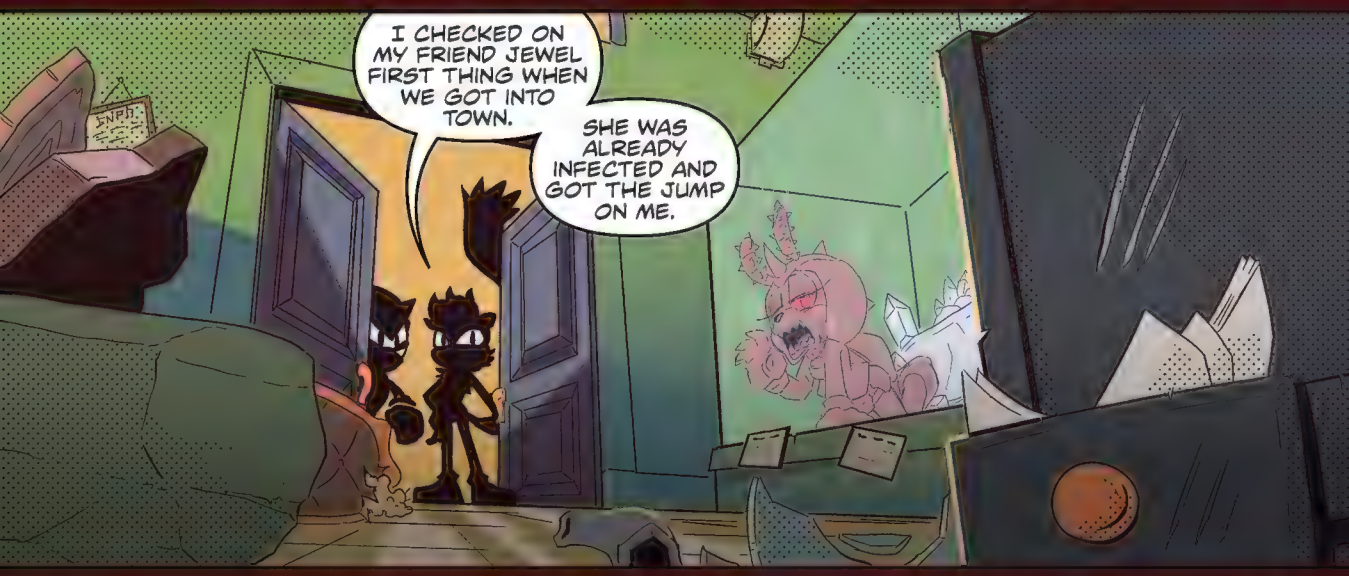
HOLD UP, SONIC!
YO, TAILS! HEY, CREAM!
H'LO, MR. SONIC.
HER MOTHER HELD BACK ZOMBOTS SO WE COULD ESCAPE. CREAM SAW EVERYTHING.
PLEASE TELL ME YOU HAVE THE DATA RECORDER STASHED SOMEWHERE.
I RAN INTO EGGMAN AND...
...I'M SORRY, BRO. I BOTCHED EVERYTHING.
I-IT'S FINE. WITHOUT MY LAB OR THE HEADQUARTERS, I WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN ABLE TO SYNTHESIZE A VACCINE A-ANYWAY...

ALL RIGHT... THEN LET'S FOCUS ON THE "NOW." TAILS?
RIGHT. =SNIFF= WE COULDN'T FIND ANYONE ELSE. EVERYONE'S BECOME ZOMBOTS.
THEN IT'S TIME TO GO. GO SIGNAL THE OTHERS TO RETREAT.
RIGHT. I'LL FIND TANGLE AND COORDINATE WITH HER.
I'LL FIND ESPIO AND WHISPER, THEN.
AMY ROSE. I PERFORMED A SCAN ON SONIC.
HE'S INFECTED. WE'VE ALL KNOWN THAT FOR A WHILE.
CORRECT. HOWEVER, I RAN CALCULATIONS ON THE LEVEL OF INFECTION HE EXHIBITED. IT IS HIGHER THAN PREVIOUS ESTIMATES SHOULD ALLOW.
IT'S BEEN A LONG DAY, GEMERL. WHAT ARE YOU GETTING AT?
"SUMMARIZING: SONIC'S SPEED IS LOSING ITS ABILITY TO STOP THE VIRUS."

THESE AREN'T YOUR GEMSTONES! YOU'RE ZOMBOTS! YOU DON'T EVEN WANT STUFF ANYMORE!
FINALLY!
WHAM
ANYONE NEEDING RESCUE?
NAH, I'M FINE!
I MEAN YOUR NEIGHBORS.
OH! YEAH! HA! NAH, THE BLOCK IS CLEAR.

AMY'S CALLING FOR RETREAT. BUT THE MINUTE WE STOP CAUSING A RUCKUS ALL OVER TOWN...
THE ZOMBOTS WILL HEAD FOR THE BIG, NOISY SHUTTLE. NOT GOOD.
THEY BLOCKED EVERYTHING OFF EXCEPT ONE AVENUE. ANY IDEAS ON HOW TO PLUG THE BOTTLENECK?
I SURE DO!
STEP ONE! YOU PICK ME UP.
STEP TWO! I WRAP MY TAIL AROUND ONE OF THE LAMPPOSTS!
STEP THREE! YOU WIND US BETWEEN THE LAMPPOSTS AND USE MY TAIL AS A TRIPWIRE!
YEAH, THAT COULD WORK. EXCEPT FOR—Y'KNOW—YOU GETTING INFECTED!

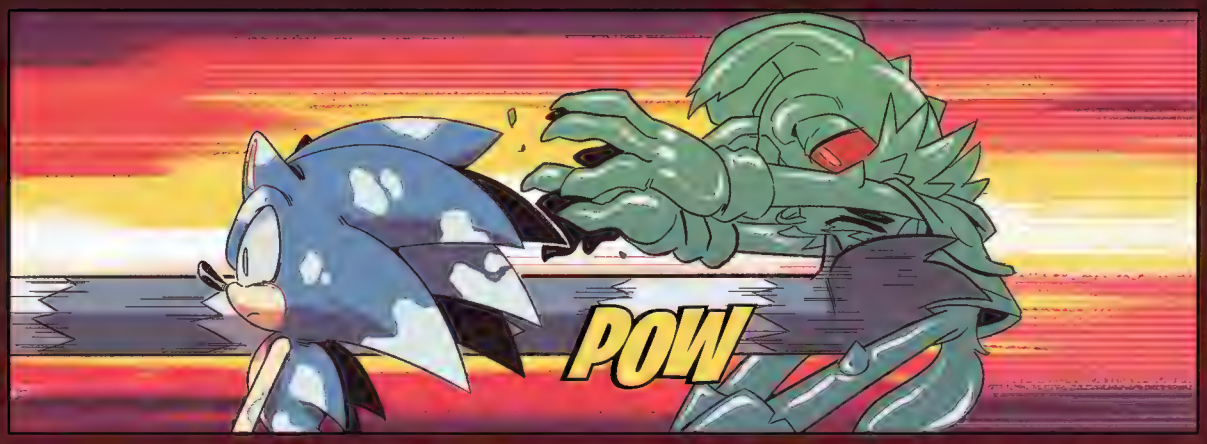
OH, THAT? PFFFT! ALREADY GOT IT COVERED!


I CHECKED ON MY FRIEND JEWEL FIRST THING WHEN WE GOT INTO TOWN.
SHE WAS ALREADY INFECTED AND GOT THE JUMP ON ME.

I'VE BEEN HOLDING BACK, TRYING TO KEEP FROM TURNING TOO FAST.
BUT I'M NOT GOING TO LAST MUCH LONGER.

TANGLE... I'M SORRY...
FOR WHAT? IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT.

ISN'T IT? MAYBE IF I'D LISTENED TO SHADOW AND... OR IF I HADN'T LET METAL SONIC GO...


POW

YOU DIDN'T BRING EGGMAN BACK. THAT WAS STARLINE. YOU MADE SURE METAL WAS HARMLESS. EGGMAN WEAPONIZED HIM AGAIN.
YEAH, AND I HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO PROTECT MY FRIENDS. OR ANYONE ELSE.

YEAH? THEN I GUESS NOBODY'S GUARDING THAT SHUTTLE FULL OF NOTHING?
TANGLE, YOU... HEH. YOU'RE NOT GOING TO LET THIS GET TO YOU, ARE YOU?

NEVER!

BECAUSE YOU'RE SONIC THE HEDGEHOG. YOU'LL SET THIS RIGHT. I KNOW YOU WILL.
NOW, LESS MOPING AND MORE MOVING!
YES, MA'AM!

WOO-HOO!
OKAY-OKAY-OKAY! NO MORE! YOU'RE GONNA PULL MY BUTT OFF!

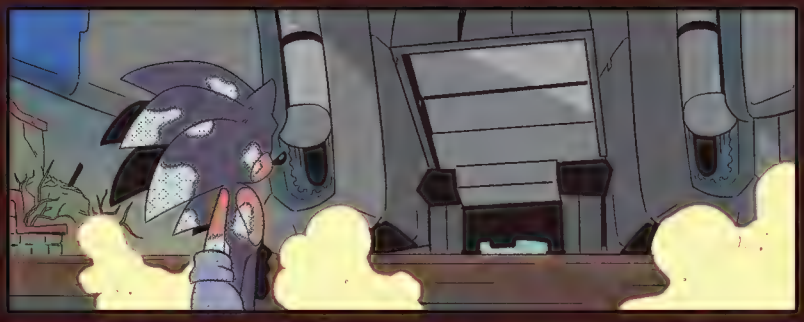
THAT SHOULD HOLD. LONG ENOUGH FOR YOU TO SKEDADDLE, AT LEAST.
SO... UM... TELL THE OTHERS I'M SORRY.
ESPECIALLY WHISPER. SHE'S GONNA TAKE IT REALLY HARD.
SURE THING. THANKS FOR EVERYTHING.
ALRIGHT! ALRIGHT! GET MOVING!
TANGLE...
I TOLD YOU, I'VE GOT THIS! GO!

SNIFF
LET'S GO THEN!
YOU MIGHT AS WELL TURN BACK! YOU USED TO BE MY NEIGHBORS! YOU KNOW I WON'T LET YOU PAST!

LET'S GET GOING. I'LL RIDE ON THE OUTSIDE.
WHERE'S TANGLE?
SHE GOT INFECTED. SHE'S STAYING BEHIND TO COVER ALL OF US. SHE SAID SHE WAS "SORRY"... BUT HEROES HAVE NOTHING TO BE SORRY ABOUT.
TANGLE!
WHISPER! DON'T!
SONIC— HELP ME!
I CAN'T!

DON'T–!

OKAY, LET'S GO!

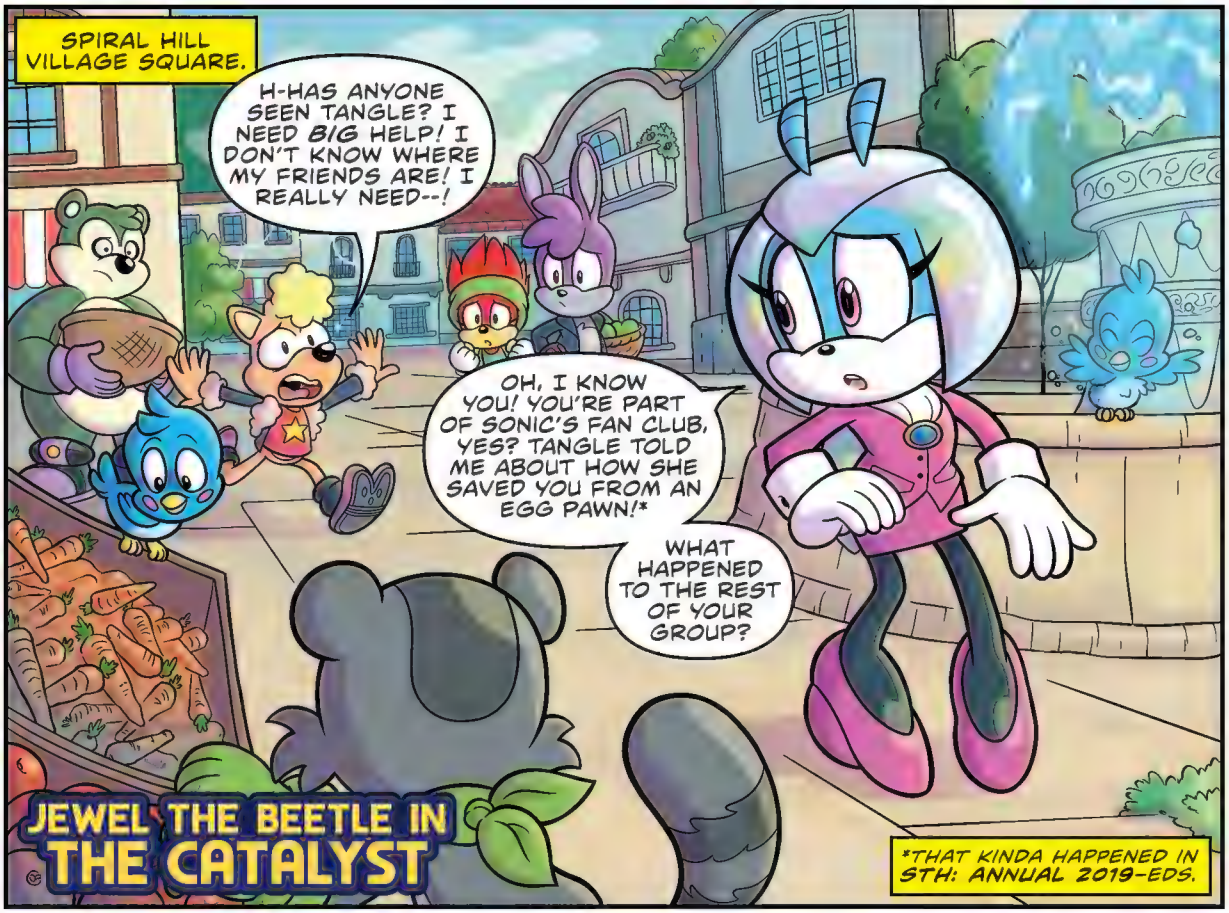


DON'T KEEP ME WAITING TOO LONG...
HEY! I'M NOT DONE YET!
YEE! OH, THAT'S UNPLEASANT!
C-C'MON! I'M S-STILL STANDING!
STILL FIGHTING!
STILL—!

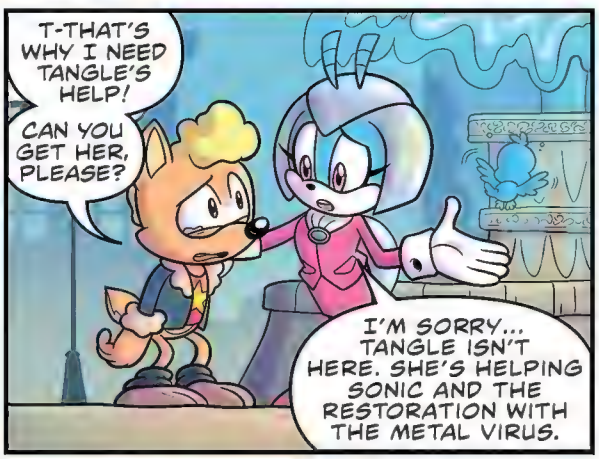
LATER— ABOARD THE FACESHIP.
DOCTOR, I HAVE FOUND A SOLUTION TO THE ONGOING PROBLEM OF NOT BEING ABLE TO CONTROL THE ZOMBOTS.
I TOLD YOU I'D FIGURE SOMETHING OUT. QUIT PESTERING ME ABOUT IT!
NO, SIR. I INSIST.

ART BY NATHALIE FOURDRAINE

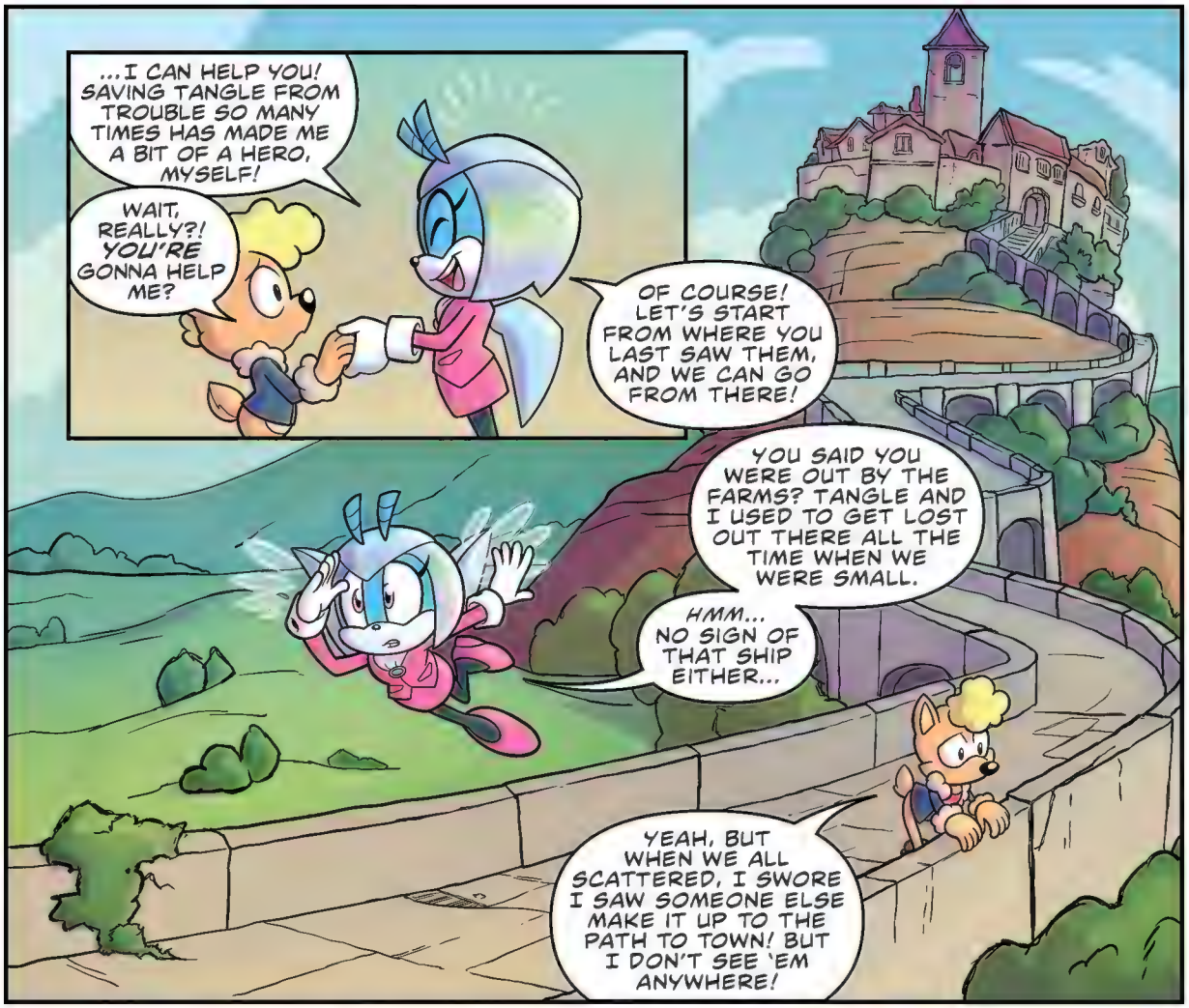
Happy
2nd
Anniversary!
Karasuno.

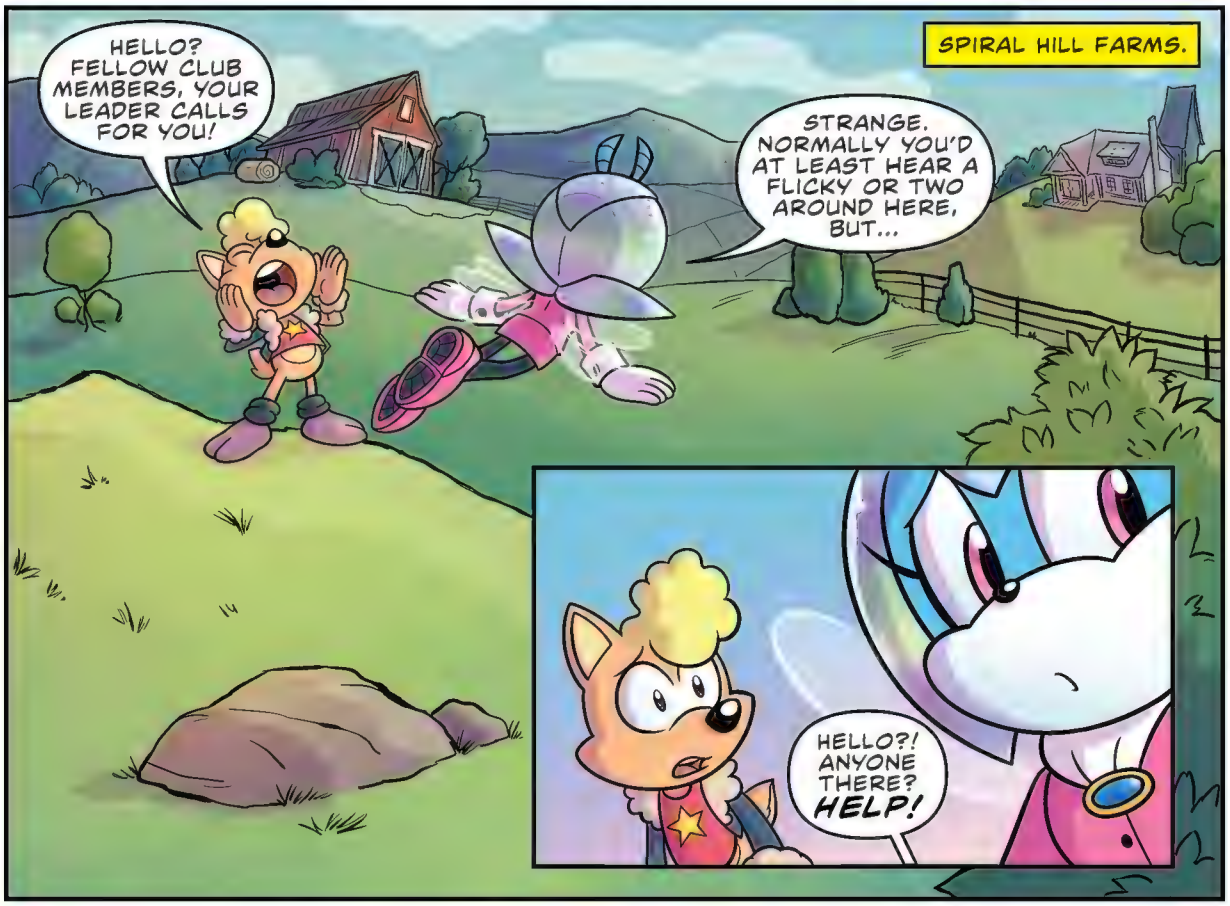

SPIRAL HILL VILLAGE SQUARE.
H-HAS ANYONE SEEN TANGLE? I NEED BIG HELP! I DON'T KNOW WHERE MY FRIENDS ARE! I REALLY NEED--!
OH, I KNOW YOU! YOU'RE PART OF SONIC'S FAN CLUB, YES? TANGLE TOLD ME ABOUT HOW SHE SAVED YOU FROM AN EGG PAWN!*
WHAT HAPPENED TO THE REST OF YOUR GROUP?
JEWEL THE BEETLE IN THE CATALYST
*THAT KINDA HAPPENED IN STH: ANNUAL 2019-EDS.

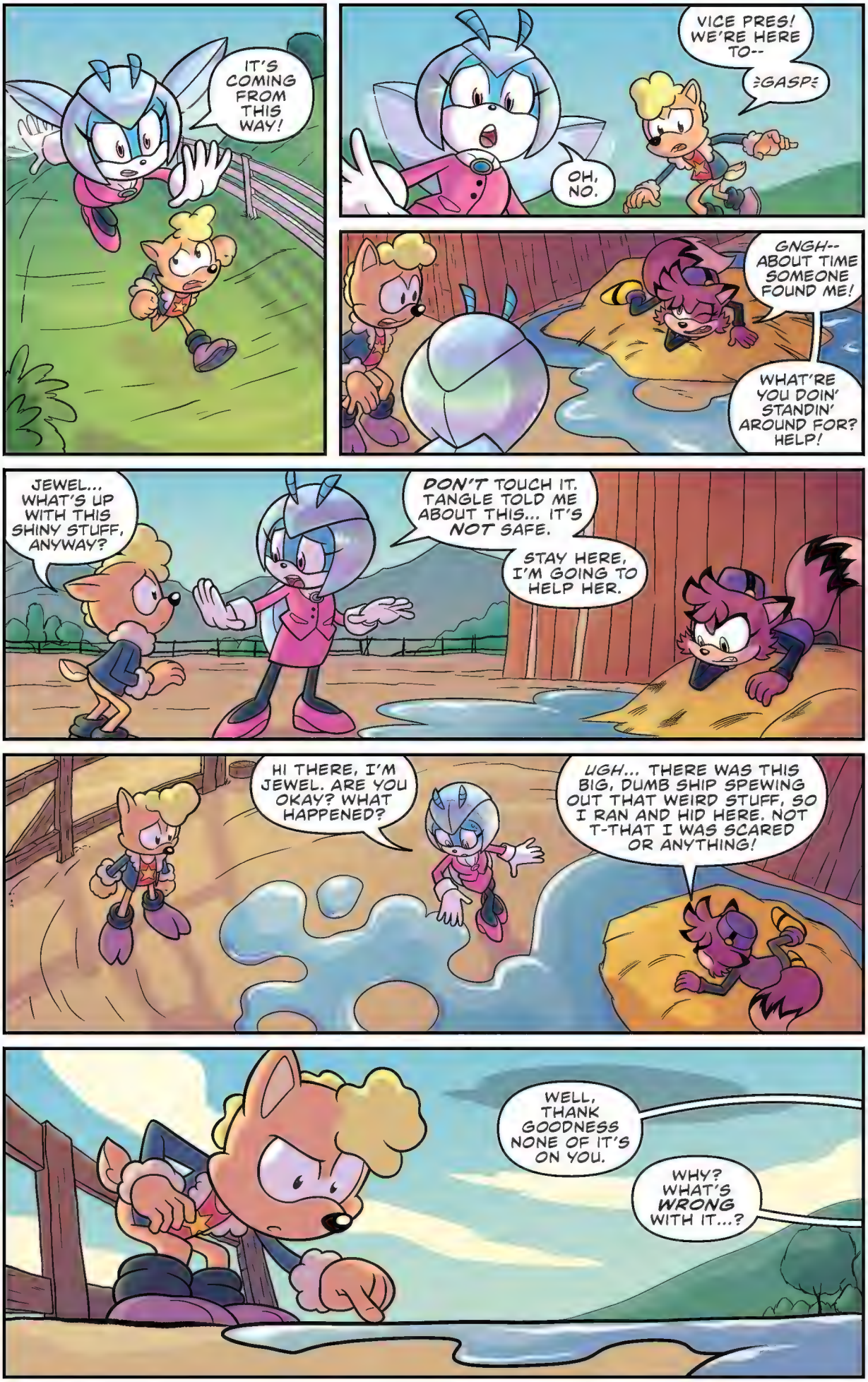
OUR CLUB WAS MEETING WAAAY OUT IN THE FARMS! BUT... THEN A BIG SHIP STARTED DROPPING WEIRD GUNK FROM THE SKY. EVERYONE WAS RUNNIN'! AND THEN I-I GOT SEPARATED AND...
...IT'S BEEN ALMOST AN HOUR AND I-I'M SCARED! I'M THEIR PRESIDENT! IT'S MY DUTY TO FIND MY FRIENDS IF THEY'RE MISSING! I-I'M...
≥SNIFF≤


T-THAT'S WHY I NEED TANGLE'S HELP!
CAN YOU GET HER, PLEASE?
I'M SORRY... TANGLE ISN'T HERE. SHE'S HELPING SONIC AND THE RESTORATION WITH THE METAL VIRUS.

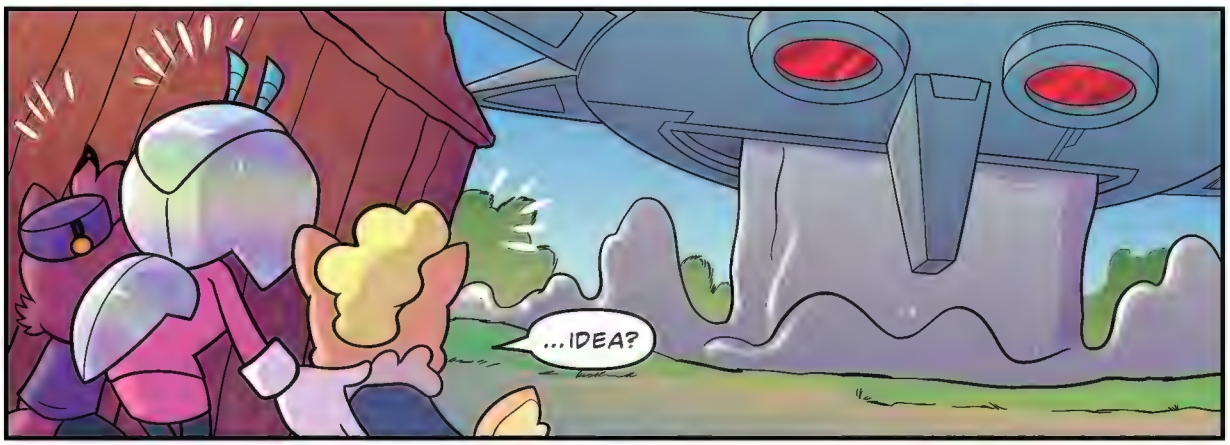
OH.
BUT...


...I CAN HELP YOU! SAVING TANGLE FROM TROUBLE SO MANY TIMES HAS MADE ME A BIT OF A HERO, MYSELF!
WAIT, REALLY?! YOU'RE GONNA HELP ME?
OF COURSE! LET'S START FROM WHERE YOU LAST SAW THEM, AND WE CAN GO FROM THERE!
YOU SAID YOU WERE OUT BY THE FARMS? TANGLE AND I USED TO GET LOST OUT THERE ALL THE TIME WHEN WE WERE SMALL.
HMM... NO SIGN OF THAT SHIP EITHER...
YEAH, BUT WHEN WE ALL SCATTERED, I SWORE I SAW SOMEONE ELSE MAKE IT UP TO THE PATH TO TOWN! BUT I DON'T SEE 'EM ANYWHERE!

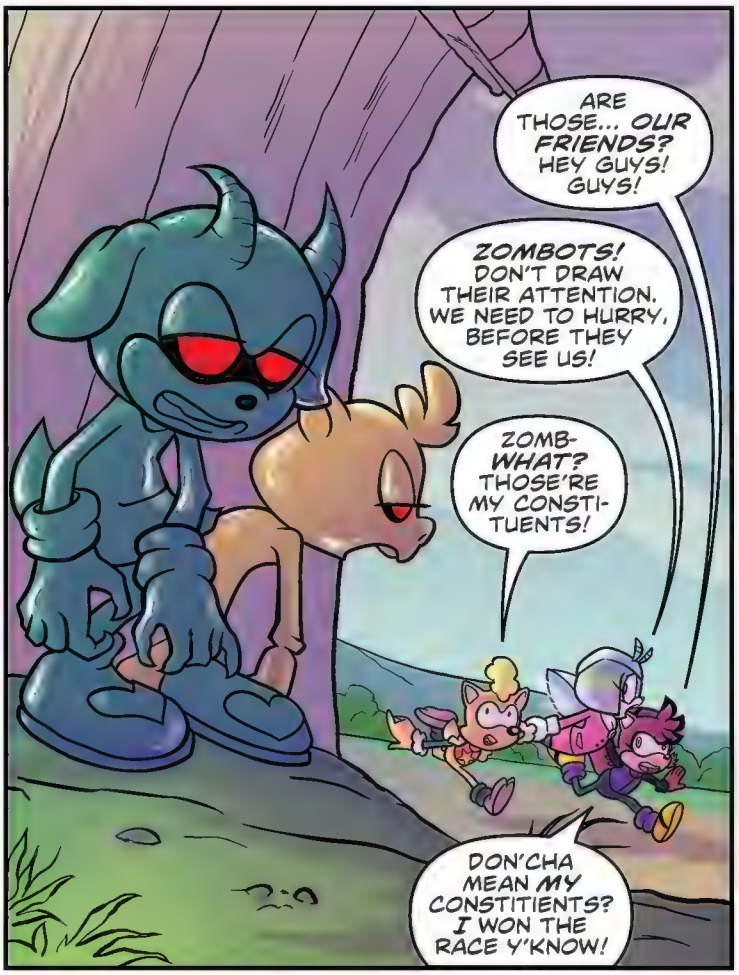

SPIRAL HILL FARMS.
HELLO? FELLOW CLUB MEMBERS, YOUR LEADER CALLS FOR YOU!
STRANGE. NORMALLY YOU'D AT LEAST HEAR A FLICKY OR TWO AROUND HERE, BUT...
HELLO?! ANYONE THERE? HELP!

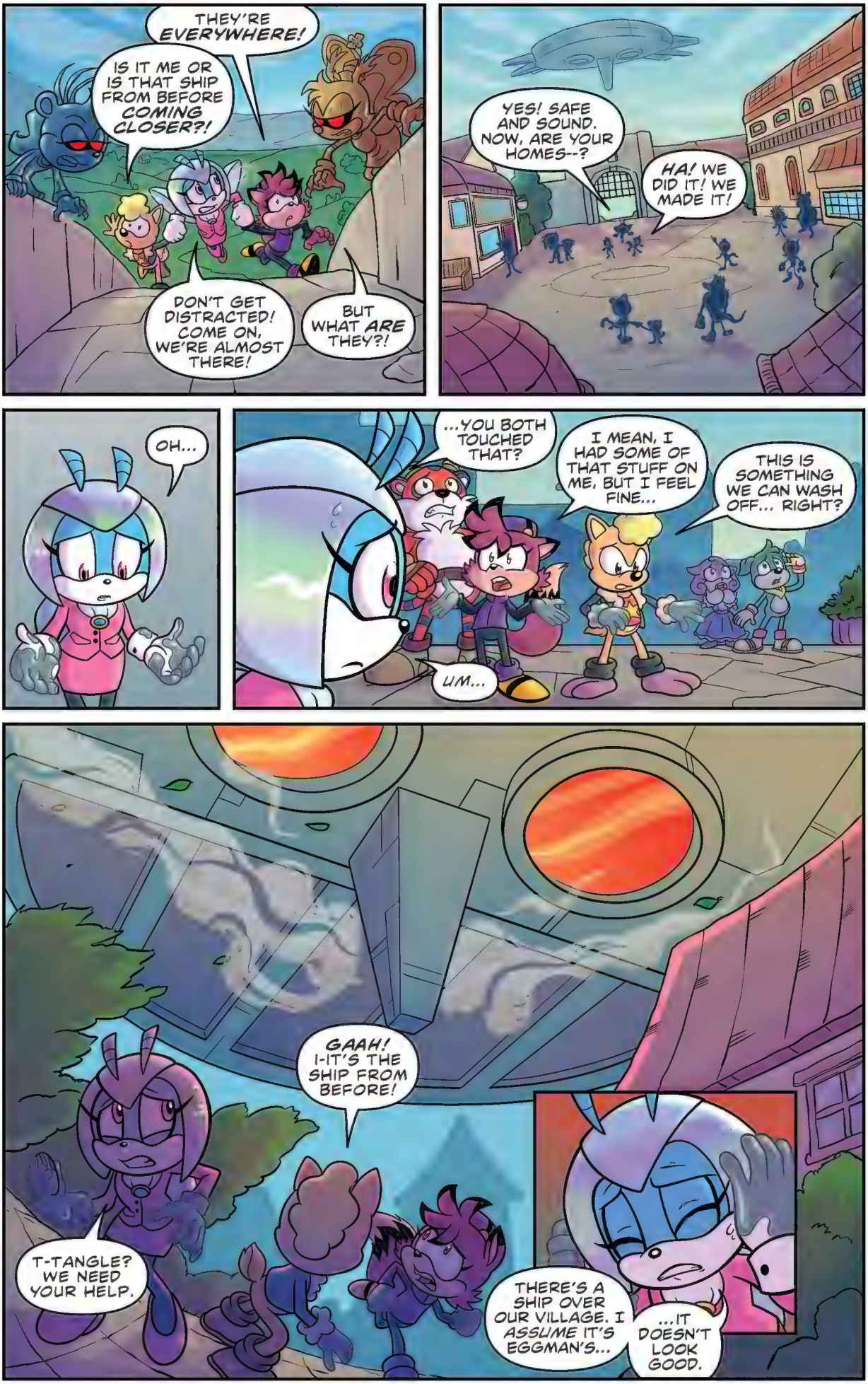

IT'S COMING FROM THIS WAY!
VICE PRES! WE'RE HERE TO--
=GASP=
OH, NO.
GNGH-- ABOUT TIME SOMEONE FOUND ME!
WHAT'RE YOU DOIN' STANDIN' AROUND FOR? HELP!
JEWEL... WHAT'S UP WITH THIS SHINY STUFF, ANYWAY?
DON'T TOUCH IT. TANGLE TOLD ME ABOUT THIS... IT'S NOT SAFE.
STAY HERE, I'M GOING TO HELP HER.
HI THERE, I'M JEWEL. ARE YOU OKAY? WHAT HAPPENED?
UGH... THERE WAS THIS BIG, DUMB SHIP SPEWING OUT THAT WEIRD STUFF, SO I RAN AND HID HERE. NOT T-THAT I WAS SCARED OR ANYTHING!
WELL, THANK GOODNESS NONE OF IT'S ON YOU.
WHY? WHAT'S WRONG WITH IT...?

IT'D BE VERY BAD. SONIC IS... TRYING TO STOP IT. TANGLE TOO. BUT IT'S VERY DANGEROUS.
NOW THEN, WE SHOULD HEAD BACK HOME.
Y-YEAH! THAT'S A GOOD...

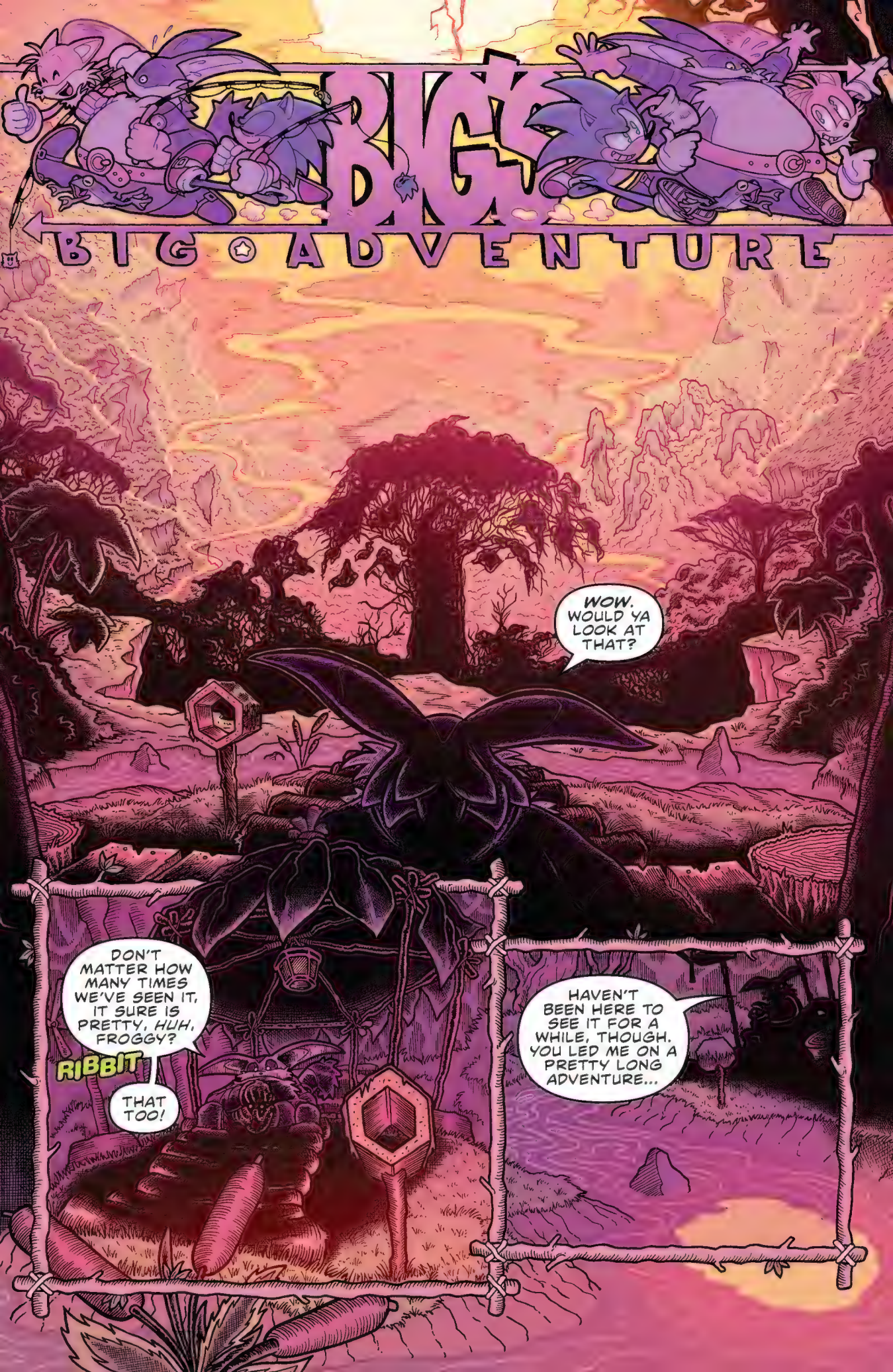

...IDEA?

SWOOSH
EEEK!


ARE THOSE... OUR FRIENDS? HEY GUYS! GUYS!
ZOMBOTS! DON'T DRAW THEIR ATTENTION. WE NEED TO HURRY, BEFORE THEY SEE US!
ZOMB-WHAT? THOSE'RE MY CONSTI-TUENTS!
DON'CHA MEAN MY CONSTITIENTS? I WON THE RACE Y'KNOW!

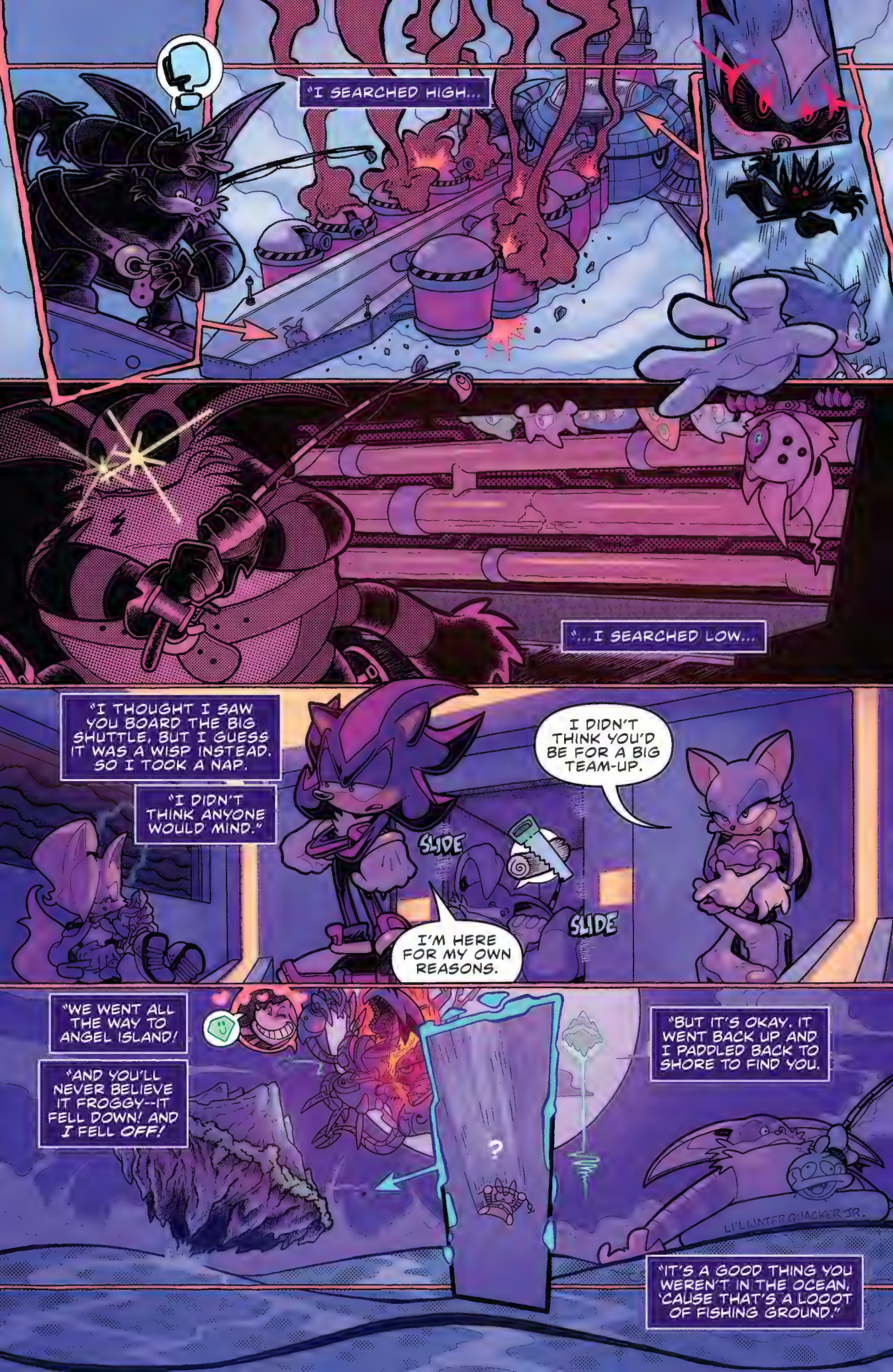

THEY'RE EVERYWHERE!
IS IT ME OR IS THAT SHIP FROM BEFORE COMING CLOSER?!
DON'T GET DISTRACTED! COME ON, WE'RE ALMOST THERE!
BUT WHAT ARE THEY?!
YES! SAFE AND SOUND. NOW, ARE YOUR HOMES--?
HA! WE DID IT! WE MADE IT!
OH...
...YOU BOTH TOUCHED THAT?
I MEAN, I HAD SOME OF THAT STUFF ON ME, BUT I FEEL FINE...
THIS IS SOMETHING WE CAN WASH OFF... RIGHT?
UM...
GAAH! I-IT'S THE SHIP FROM BEFORE!
T-TANGLE? WE NEED YOUR HELP.
THERE'S A SHIP OVER OUR VILLAGE. I ASSUME IT'S EGGMAN'S...
...IT DOESN'T LOOK GOOD.

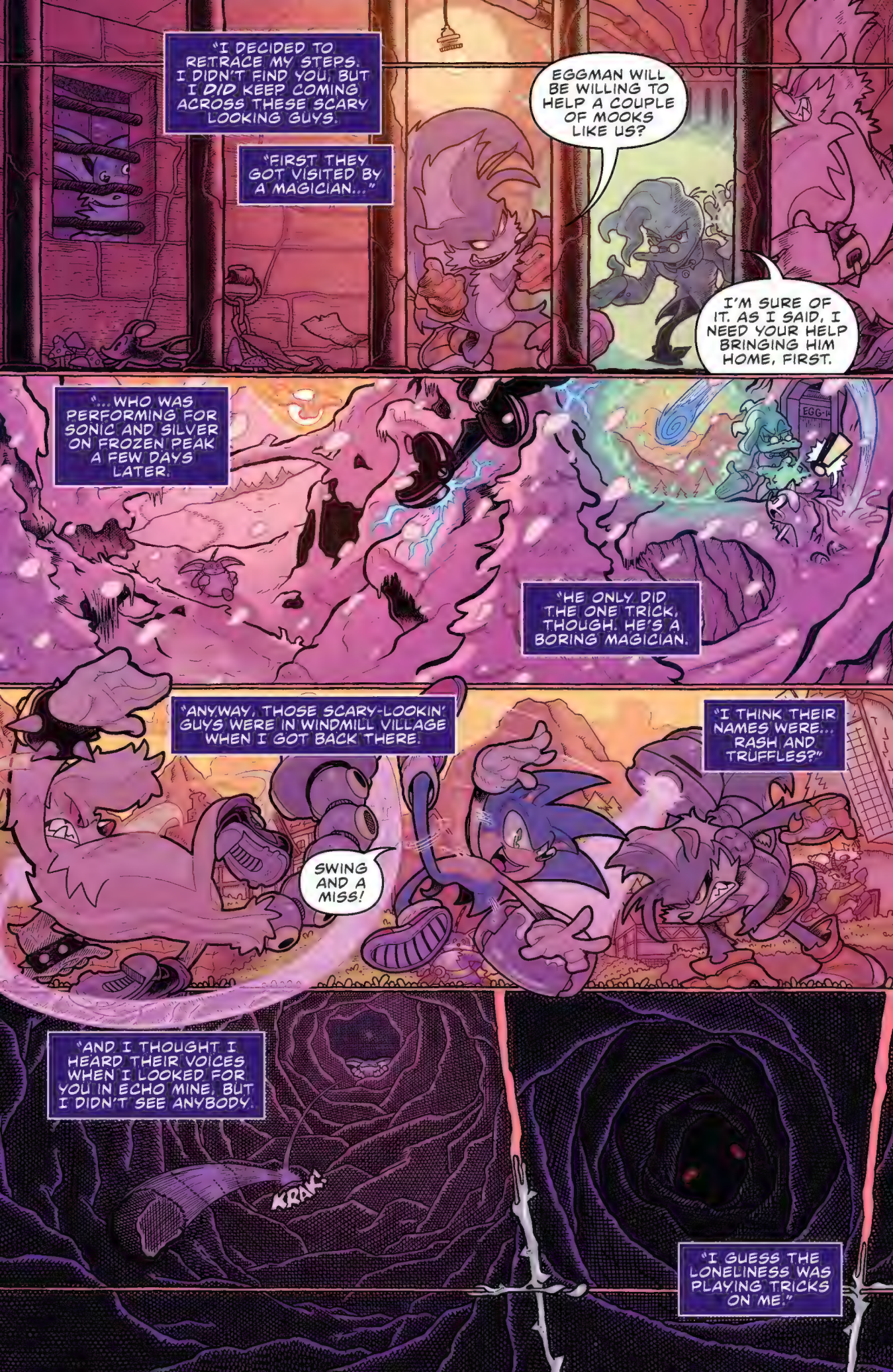
JEWEL? YOU HERE?
LATER...
CREEK
I CAME AS FAST AS I COULD! ARE YOU OKAY? ARE YOU...
...S-STILL YOU?

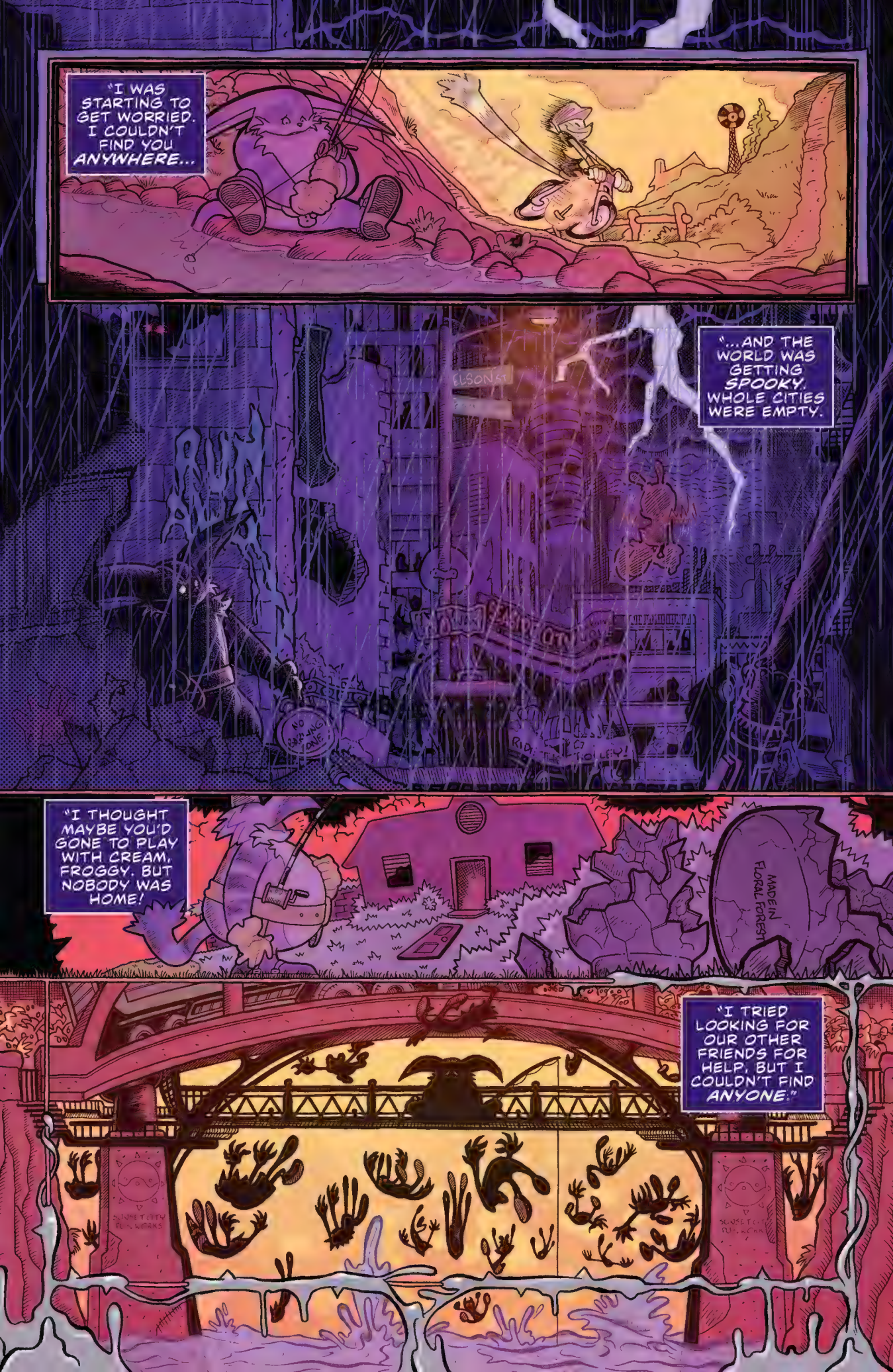

BIG
BIG ADVENTURE
WOW. WOULD YA LOOK AT THAT?
DON'T MATTER HOW MANY TIMES WE'VE SEEN IT, IT SURE IS PRETTY, HUH, FROGGY?
RIBBIT
THAT TOO!
HAVEN'T BEEN HERE TO SEE IT FOR A WHILE, THOUGH. YOU LED ME ON A PRETTY LONG ADVENTURE...

"FIRST, YOU LED ME ALL THE WAY TO VISTA VIEW..."
VISTA
VIEW SEWERS
TUNNEL SYSTEM
WHAM!!!
HEY, BIG GUY!
HEY, LITTLE GUY.
EXIT
TUNNEL SYSTEM
"HEDGEHOG." NOUN. A BURROWING ANIMAL.
SPANG!

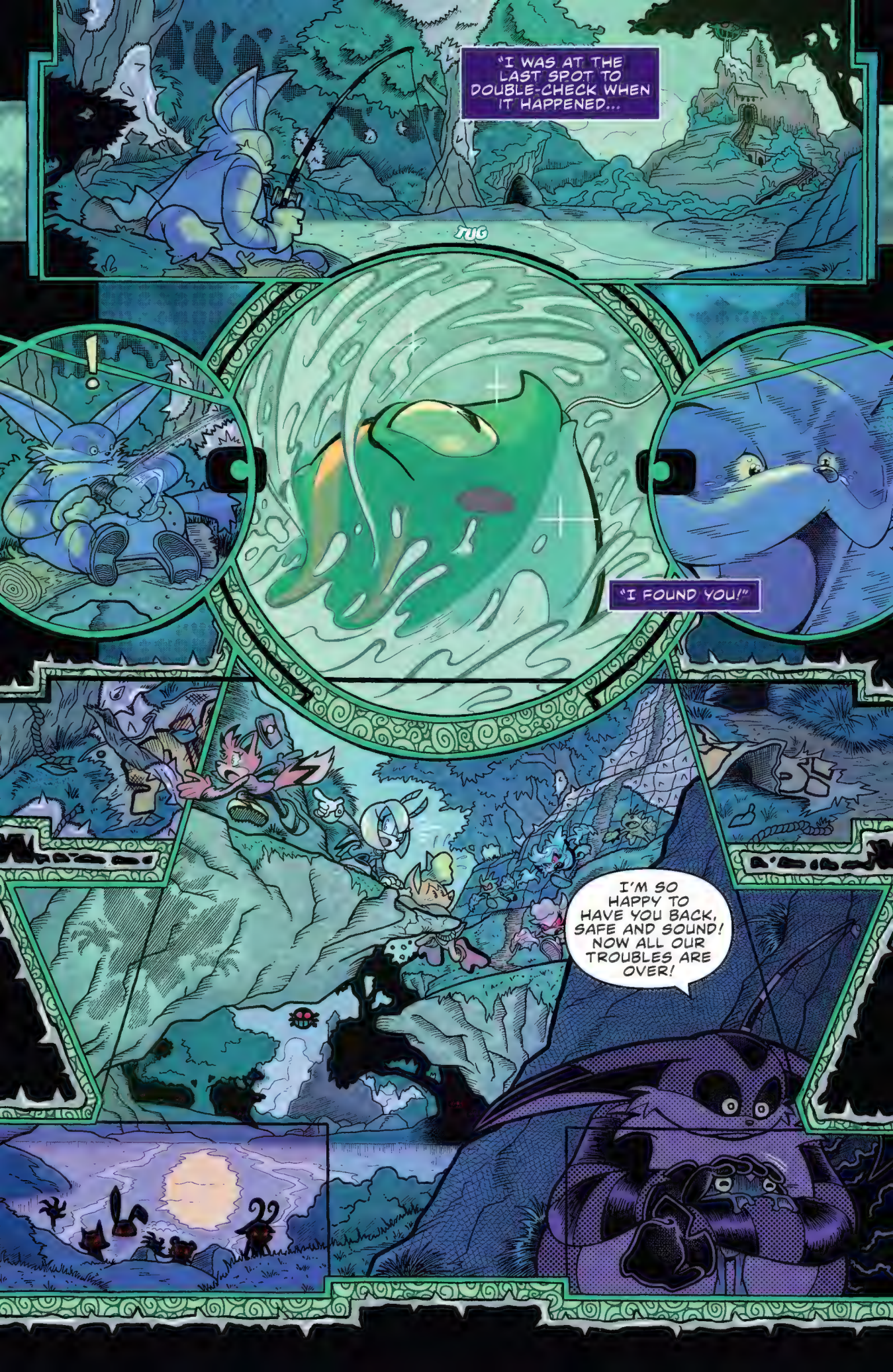
"FROM THERE, I FOLLOWED YOU TO RIVERSIDE..."
"...TO BARRICADE TOWN..."
LOOKIN' TO SCRAP?
NO.
THEN GET READY TO CRUMBLE!
NO THANK YOU.
"...TO SPIRAL HILL VILLAGE..."
FROGGY! IT'S NOT SAFE HERE! C'MON!
"...BUT I LOST TRACK OF YOU OUTSIDE WINDMILL VILLAGE."


"I SEARCHED HIGH...
"...I SEARCHED LOW...
"I THOUGHT I SAW YOU BOARD THE BIG SHUTTLE, BUT I GUESS IT WAS A WISP INSTEAD. SO I TOOK A NAP.
"I DIDN'T THINK ANYONE WOULD MIND."
I DIDN'T THINK YOU'D BE FOR A BIG TEAM-UP.
SLIDE
SLIDE
I'M HERE FOR MY OWN REASONS.
"WE WENT ALL THE WAY TO ANGEL ISLAND!
"AND YOU'LL NEVER BELIEVE IT FROGGY--IT FELL DOWN! AND I FELL OFF!
"BUT IT'S OKAY. IT WENT BACK UP AND I PADDLED BACK TO SHORE TO FIND YOU.
?
LI'L LUNTER QUACKER JR.
"IT'S A GOOD THING YOU WEREN'T IN THE OCEAN, 'CAUSE THAT'S A LOOOT OF FISHING GROUND."

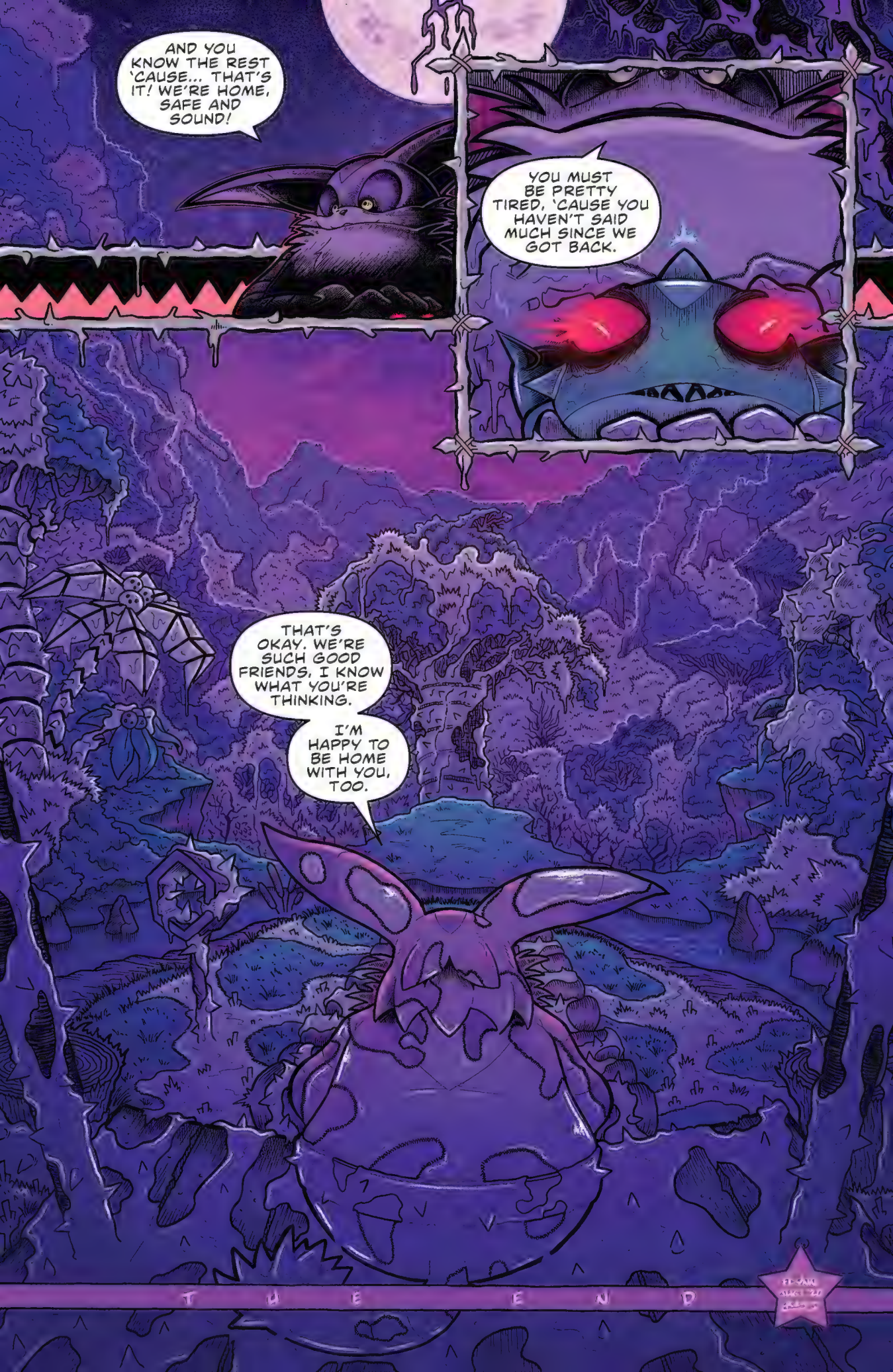

"I DECIDED TO RETRACE MY STEPS. I DIDN'T FIND YOU, BUT I *DID* KEEP COMING ACROSS THESE SCARY LOOKING GUYS.
"FIRST THEY GOT VISITED BY A MAGICIAN..."
EGGMAN WILL BE WILLING TO HELP A COUPLE OF MOOKS LIKE US?
I'M SURE OF IT. AS I SAID, I NEED YOUR HELP BRINGING HIM HOME, FIRST.
"...WHO WAS PERFORMING FOR SONIC AND SILVER ON FROZEN PEAK A FEW DAYS LATER.
"HE ONLY DID THE ONE TRICK, THOUGH. HE'S A BORING MAGICIAN.
"ANYWAY, THOSE SCARY-LOOKIN' GUYS WERE IN WINDMILL VILLAGE WHEN I GOT BACK THERE.
"I THINK THEIR NAMES WERE... RASH AND TRUFFLES?"
SWING AND A MISS!
"AND I THOUGHT I HEARD THEIR VOICES WHEN I LOOKED FOR YOU IN ECHO MINE, BUT I DIDN'T SEE ANYBODY.
KRAK!
"I GUESS THE LONELINESS WAS PLAYING TRICKS ON ME."


"I WAS STARTING TO GET WORRIED. I COULDN'T FIND YOU ANYWHERE...
"...AND THE WORLD WAS GETTING SPOOKY. WHOLE CITIES WERE EMPTY.
"I THOUGHT MAYBE YOU'D GONE TO PLAY WITH CREAM, FROGGY. BUT NOBODY WAS HOME!
MADE IN FLORAL FOREST
"I TRIED LOOKING FOR OUR OTHER FRIENDS FOR HELP, BUT I COULDN'T FIND ANYONE."

"THEN I HEARD AMY HAD EVERYONE OVER FOR A BIG SLEEPOVER.
"I WENT TO CHECK IT OUT, BUT THE ROBOT WAS MEAN."
HALT. YOU MUST ENTER WITH THE OTHER REFUGEES AND BE SCANNED FOR INFECTION.
BUT I'M NOT SICK...?
VECTOR! HALT!
FROGGY! WHERE ARE YOU?!
IS THAT A ZOMBOT?!
"I COULDN'T GET IN AND I DIDN'T HEAR YOU, SO I LEFT.
SLAM
"I'LL BE HONEST, GOOD BUDDY. I WAS AWFUL LONELY AND A LITTLE AFRAID.
"BUT I KNEW YOU HAD TO BE LONELY AND SCARED, TOO, ALL ON YOUR OWN. SO I KEPT LOOKING."


"I WAS AT THE LAST SPOT TO DOUBLE-CHECK WHEN IT HAPPENED...
TUG
!
"I FOUND YOU!"
I'M SO HAPPY TO HAVE YOU BACK, SAFE AND SOUND! NOW ALL OUR TROUBLES ARE OVER!

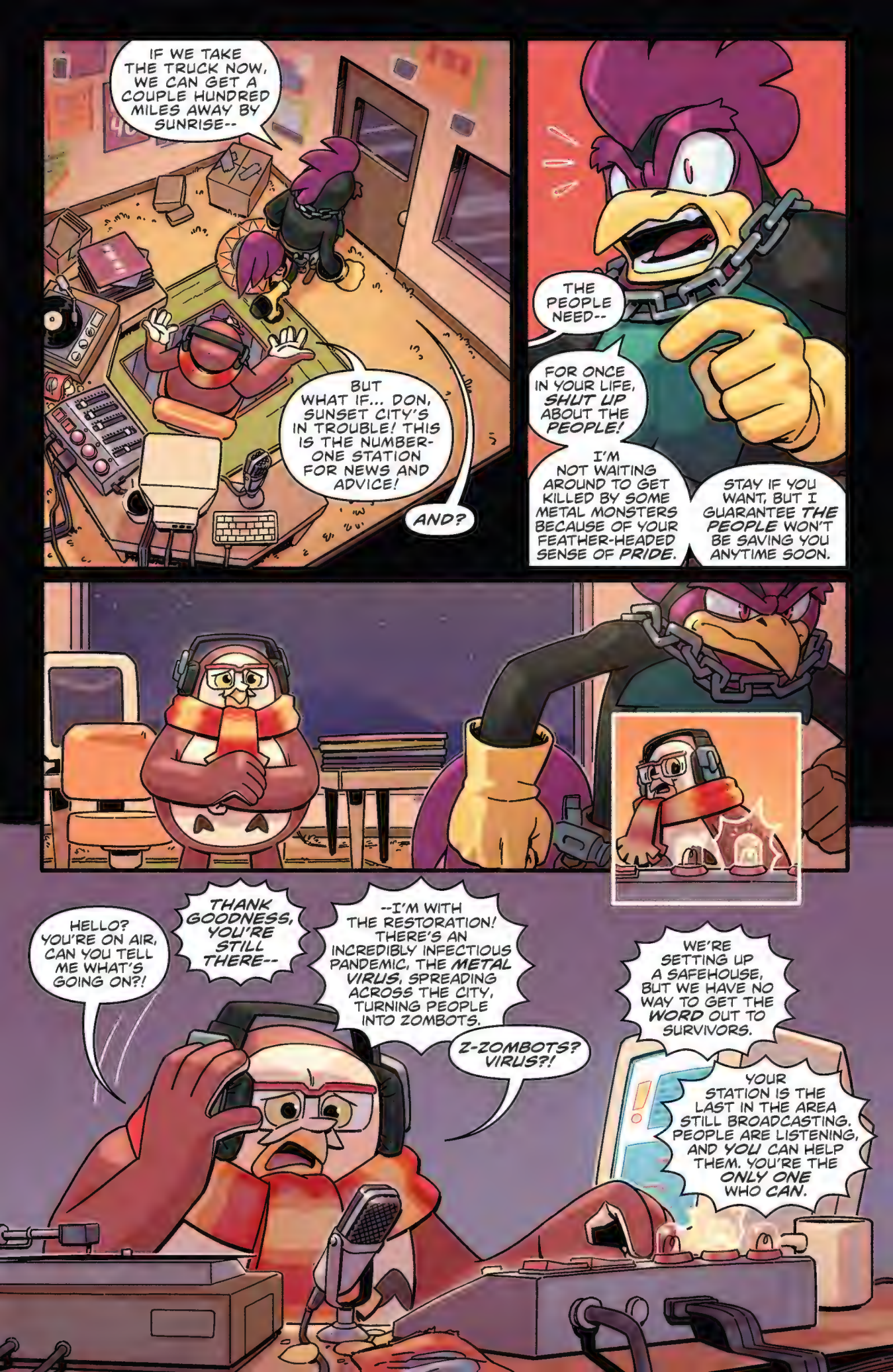
"BUT I WAS WRONG. STRANGE MONSTERS WERE ON THE ROAD!"
SHING!
I'M NOT GONNA LET YOU GET MY BEST BUDDY!
"AND YOU WERE BRAVE, TOO!
"I MADE SURE THEY COULDN'T FOLLOW US AND WE RAN ALL THE WAY HOME!"


AND YOU KNOW THE REST 'CAUSE... THAT'S IT! WE'RE HOME, SAFE AND SOUND!
YOU MUST BE PRETTY TIRED, 'CAUSE YOU HAVEN'T SAID MUCH SINCE WE GOT BACK.
THAT'S OKAY. WE'RE SUCH GOOD FRIENDS, I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE THINKING.
I'M HAPPY TO BE HOME WITH YOU, TOO.
THE END

HELLOOOO AND GOOD EVENING! AS ALWAYS, I'M NITE THE OWL AND YOU'RE LISTENING TO K-TBR 199.2: SUNSET CITY'S NUMBER-ONE STATION FOR NEWS AND ADVICE!
KTBR 199.2
AND MUSIC, WHEN I'M HERE BURNIN' THE MIDNIGHT OIL WITH Y'ALL.
NITE THE OWL: DISC JOCKEY & RADIO GURU
HERE'S SOMETHING TO GET US STARTED-- IT'S ONE'A MY FAVORITES, I'M SURE YOU'LL LOVE IT TOO.
NITE THE OWL IN DARKEST HOUR
AFTER THAT, I'LL BE TAKIN' CALLS, SO IF YOU'VE GOT ANYTHING WEIGHING YOU DOWN TONIGHT, WHY NOT GIVE NITE A CALL?

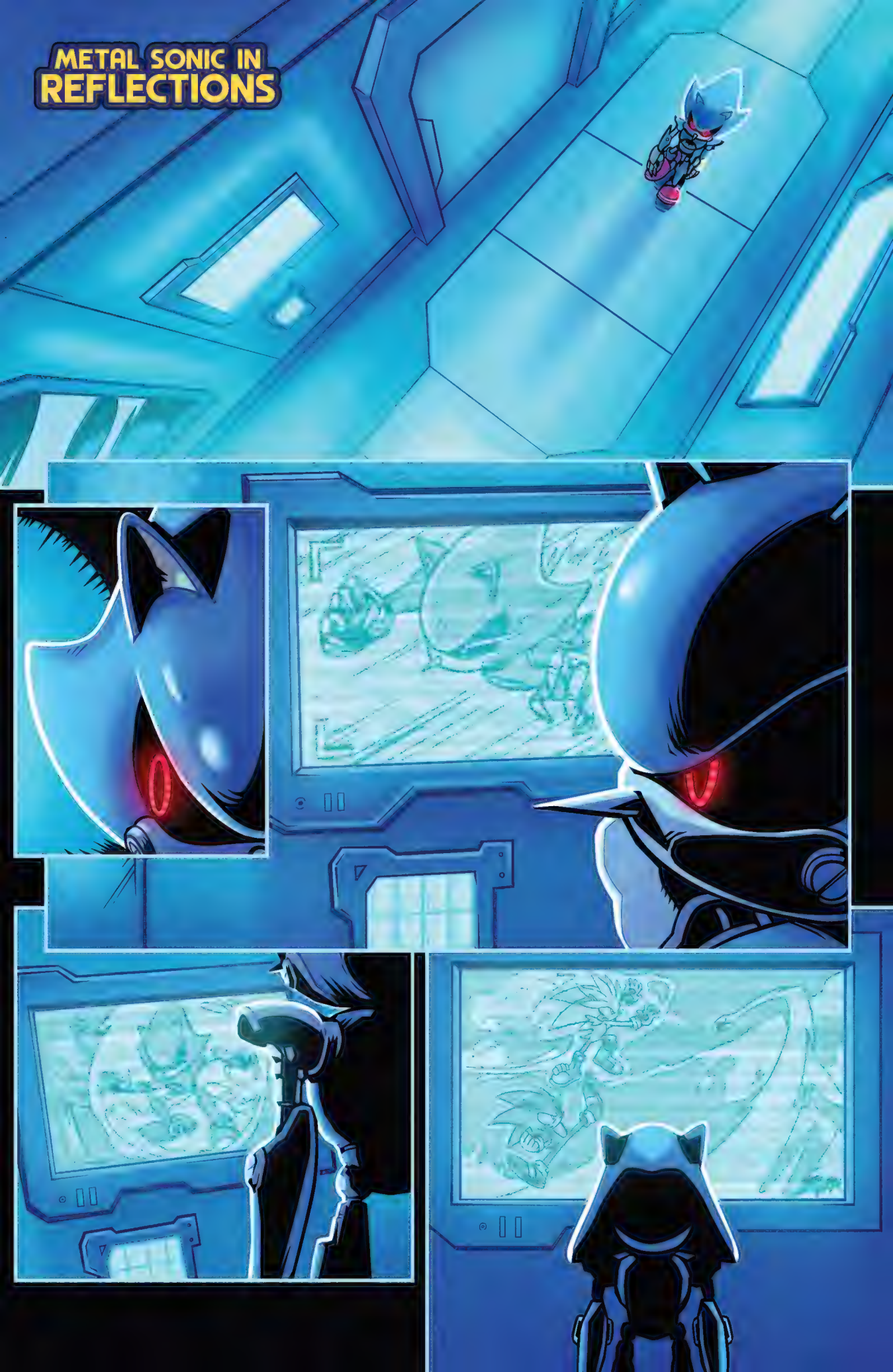
DON THE ROOSTER: CUSTODIAN, NOT A NIGHT PERSON.
UGH. ANOTHER NIGHT, ANOTHER MESS TO CLEAN UP...
AW, DONNIE, IT'S NOT SO BAD!
THINK OF IT THIS WAY: YOU'RE PROVIDING A VITAL SERVICE, KEEPING THE STATION IN TIP-TOP SHAPE!
AFTER ALL, WHERE WOULD SUNSET CITY BE WITHOUT MY DULCET TONES RIDING THE AIRWAVES?
A LOT BETTER OFF, I'D THINK.
SPEAKING OF, THERE'S OUR FIRST CALLER...!
HELLOOOO, YOU'RE ON THE AIR! WHAT'S YOUR NAME?
G-GALA... LOOK, SORRY, I DIDN'T KNOW WHO TO CALL, AND I ALWAYS HEAR THIS NUMBER ON MY RADIO.
MUST BE KISMET. WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND TONIGHT, GALA?
I NEED HELP! THERE'S THESE PEOPLE, THEY'RE FOLLOWING ME. THEY LOOK SICK...
WHAT?

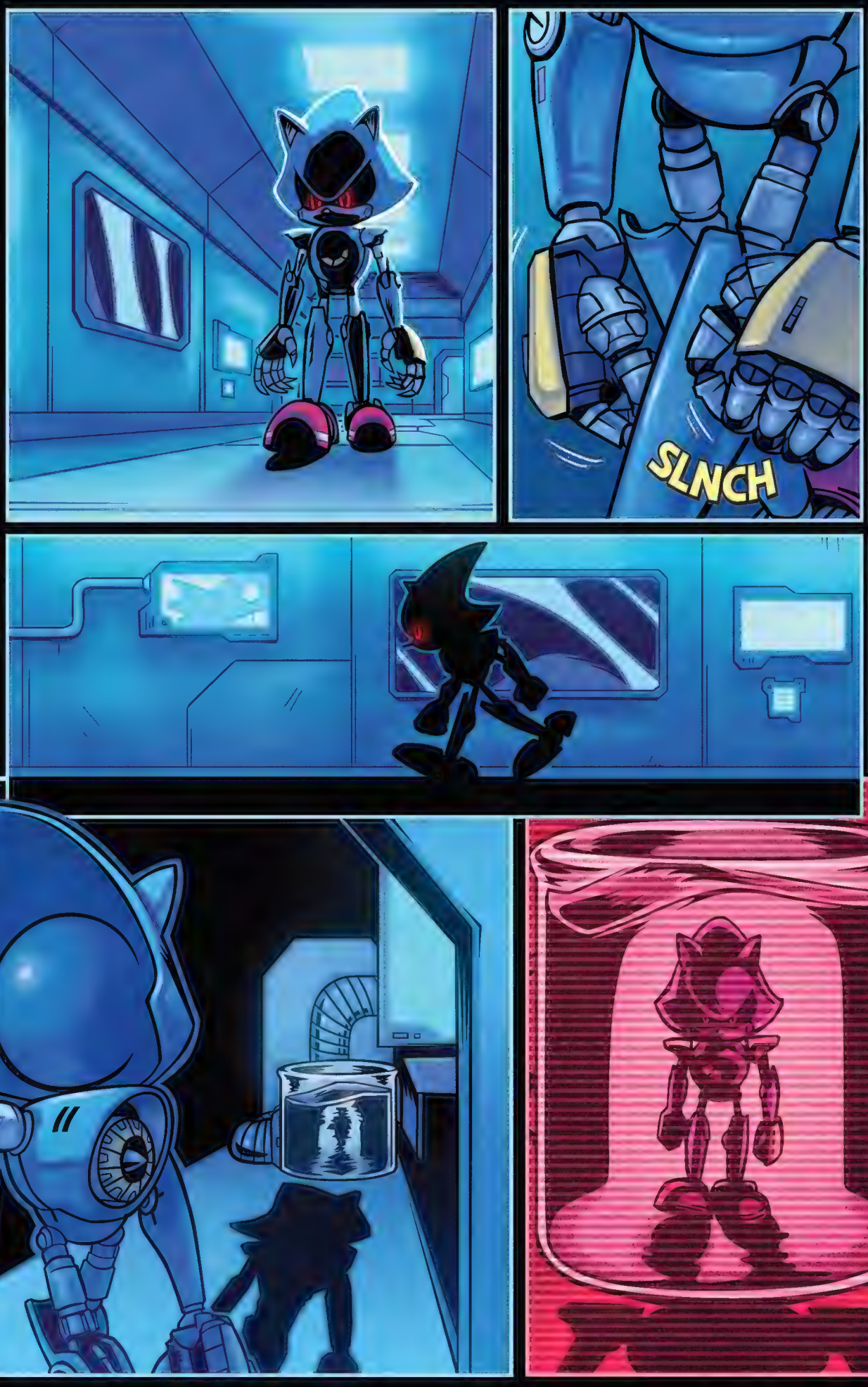
THEIR SKIN, IT'S LIKE... SHINY? LIKE METAL. I-I KNOW HOW IT SOUNDS, BUT--
MISS, TAKE A BREATH. THIS SOUNDS LIKE A JOB FOR THE POLICE, NOT--
I TRIED THAT, THERE'S NO ANSWER!
I THINK THEY FOUND M--
click
WHAT'S GOING ON?
I-I DUNNO, TAKE A LISTEN...
YOU'RE ON THE--
MY SON, HE CAME HOME SICK. I TOOK HIS TEMPERATURE, BUT NOW I'M-- AUGH--
click
H-HELLO?
ROAD BLOCKED, CAN'T GET OUT--
ALL COVERED IN METAL--
I-I THINK IT'S SPREADING--
HELP--
PLEASE, ANYONE--
I DON'T WANT TO BE--
KHXXT
SSSS...
SSSSSSS...


IF WE TAKE THE TRUCK NOW, WE CAN GET A COUPLE HUNDRED MILES AWAY BY SUNRISE--
BUT WHAT IF... DON, SUNSET CITY'S IN TROUBLE! THIS IS THE NUMBER-ONE STATION FOR NEWS AND ADVICE!
AND?
THE PEOPLE NEED--
FOR ONCE IN YOUR LIFE, SHUT UP ABOUT THE PEOPLE!
I'M NOT WAITING AROUND TO GET KILLED BY SOME METAL MONSTERS BECAUSE OF YOUR FEATHER-HEADED SENSE OF PRIDE.
STAY IF YOU WANT, BUT I GUARANTEE THE PEOPLE WON'T BE SAVING YOU ANYTIME SOON.
HELLO? YOU'RE ON AIR, CAN YOU TELL ME WHAT'S GOING ON?!
THANK GOODNESS, YOU'RE STILL THERE--
--I'M WITH THE RESTORATION! THERE'S AN INCREDIBLY INFECTIOUS PANDEMIC, THE METAL VIRUS, SPREADING ACROSS THE CITY, TURNING PEOPLE INTO ZOMBOTS.
Z-ZOMBOTS? VIRUS?!
WE'RE SETTING UP A SAFEHOUSE, BUT WE HAVE NO WAY TO GET THE WORD OUT TO SURVIVORS.
YOUR STATION IS THE LAST IN THE AREA STILL BROADCASTING. PEOPLE ARE LISTENING, AND YOU CAN HELP THEM. YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN.

OF ALL THE TIMES... C'MON!
SPRR-RR-RR...
KTBR 199.2
...RR-RR-ROAR!
FINALLY!
--YOU THINK ME READING THE RESTORATION'S EMERGENCY INSTRUCTIONS WILL REALLY HELP?
STUBBORN OLD CHATTER-MOUTH...
IT'S THE ONLY CHANCE WE'VE GOT, SIR. WE WOULDN'T ASK IF--
NO, YOU'RE RIGHT. IF EVEN ONE PERSON IS SPARED...
...IT'S WORTH IT TO ME.

ALRIGHT. I'VE GOT THE INFO YOU SENT, BUT...
...LOOK, I--I DUNNO HOW LONG I'M GONNA BE ABLE TO HOLD OUT UP HERE.
IT'S ONLY A MATTER'A TIME, REALLY, BEFORE--
HEY, THE TALENT DOESN'T NEED TO WORRY ABOUT THAT!
HAD TO GET SOME SUPPLIES FROM OUT BACK.
YOU JUST KEEP ON YAPPING, AND I'LL MAKE SURE NOTHING GETS INTO THIS STATION.
SIR? ARE YOU STILL THERE?
IT SEEMS THE PEOPLE HAVE SPOKEN--I'M WANTED ON THE AIR TONIGHT.
LEMME GET STARTED ON THAT ANNOUNCEMENT.
AHEM--"ATTENTION, THE RESTORATION IS GATHERING SURVIVORS AT THE GRAND GOLD FLICKY HOTEL. IF YOU CAN'T GET THERE, PLEASE CALL INTO THIS STATION AND LET THE RESTORATION KNOW WHERE TO FIND YOU. OUR NUMBER IS--"
HEY! CAN YA KEEP IT DOWN? I'M TRYIN' TO SAVE LIVES OVER HERE!
WHAM WHAM WHAM
KTBR 199.2
AND I'M TRYING TO SAVE YOU! HAMMERS DON'T COME WITH A "MUTE" BUTTON, YA DIVA.


METAL SONIC IN
REFLECTIONS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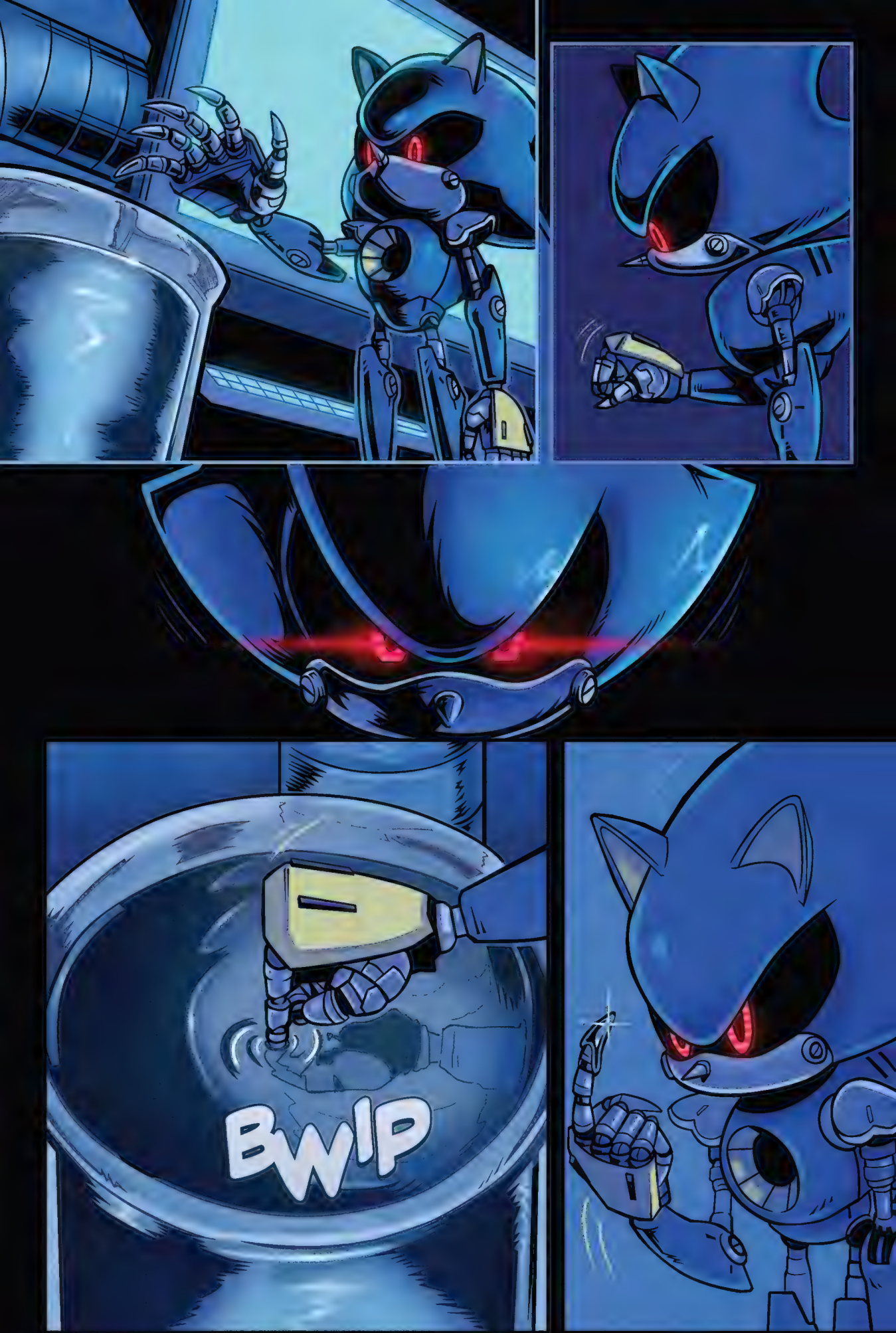
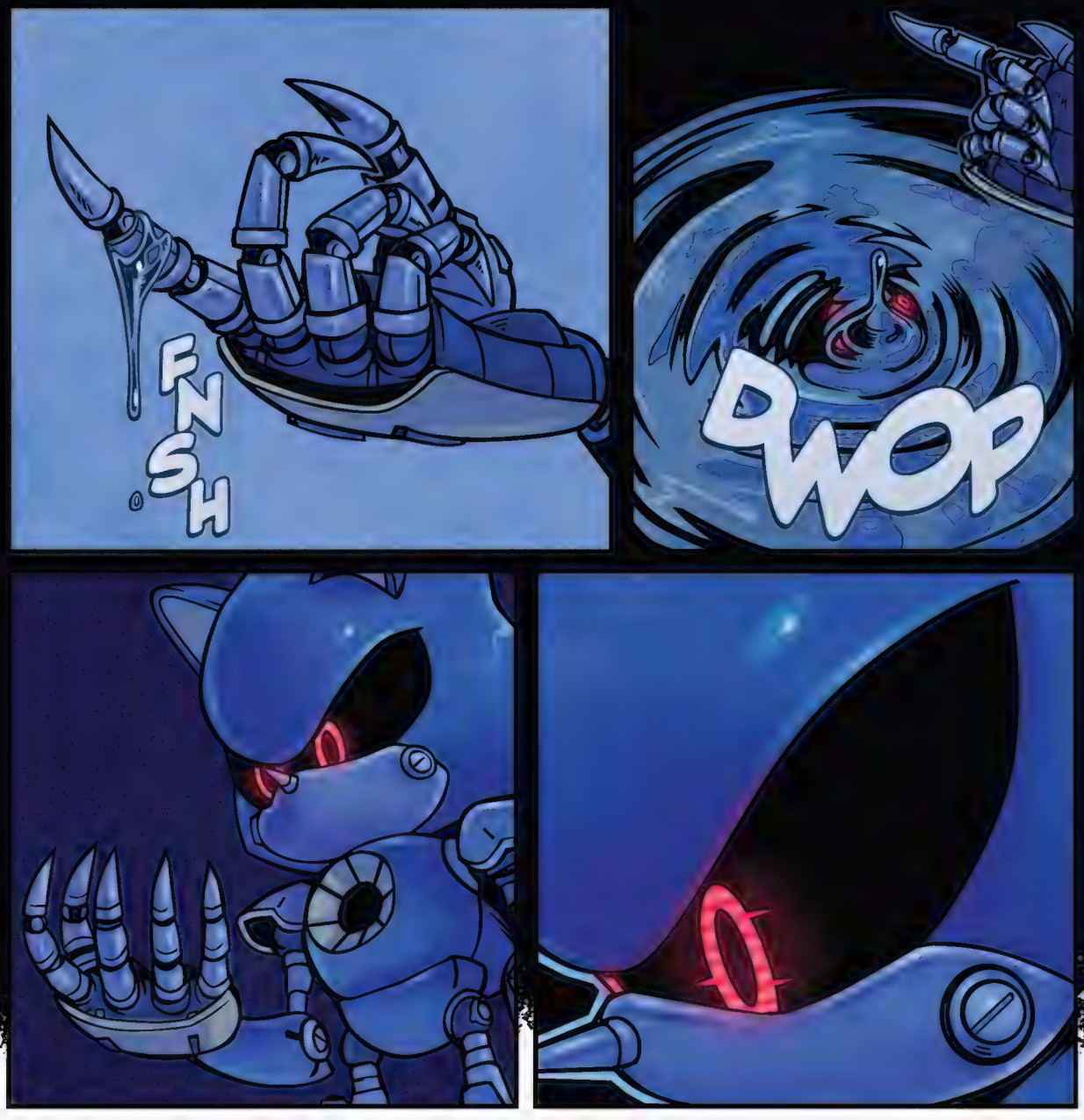

BWIP


FNSH
DWOP

AHEM!
SNAP
ARE YOUR SENSORS MALFUNCTIONING? I SAID, "GET OUT!"
I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS.
THE DOCTOR'S GREATEST CREATION SHAMBLING AROUND MY LAB LIKE A ZOMBOT.

DR. STARLINE IN EGGMAN'S DAY OFF
MARVELOUS... HIS GENIUS IS COMING TO FRUITION! THE DOCTOR IS SUCH A VISIONARY!
NOW, NOW, WHAT'S THIS?
ARGH!
DOCTOR!

DON'T WORRY, I'M COMING, SIR!
STARLINE?!
YAAAH!
I THOUGHT YOU WERE IN TROUBLE! ARE YOU OKAY?
I WOULD BE IF I COULD FIND THE BLASTED LIGHT SWITCH!
REST ASSURED, THE ROBOT WHO INSTALLED IT AT THE BACK OF THE ROOM IS NOW SCRAP METAL.
CLICK
SINCE YOU'RE HERE, I SUPPOSE I SHOULD INTRODUCE YOU TO...

...THE EGGCAVE! HA HA HA!
MY INNER SANCTUM! MY HOME AWAY FROM HOME--BUT ACTUALLY STILL AT HOME! JUST A LITTLE MORE UNDERGROUND THAN THE OTHER ROOMS!
DO NOT TOUCH!
WOW...

THIS IS WHERE I LIKE TO SPEND MY DAYS OFF AND TAKE A LITTLE TIME JUST FOR ME.
WORK ON SOME PERSONAL PROJECTS IN A QUIET SPACE WHERE I CAN FOCUS AND REALLY GET THE EGG JUICES FLOWING!

YOU KNOW, I DON'T THINK I'VE HAD ANY VISITORS HERE BEFORE.
OH! IT'S TRULY AN HONOR, SIR!

EVEN THE GREATEST MASTERMINDS NEED A HOBBY, WOULDN'T YOU AGREE?
ON MY DAYS OFF, I LIKE TO BUILD TOY ROBOTS. IT'S RELAXING, PIECING EVERYTHING TOGETHER.
BUT YOU PROMISED TO BRIEF ME THIS AFTERNOON...

AND WITH THESE TOY ROBOTS, I LIKE TO FIGURE OUT STRATEGIES AND BATTLE PLANS FOR THE WEEK AHEAD, AND, WELL...

BASH BASH
...PERHAPS EVIL NEVER REALLY TAKES A BREAK, DOES IT? HA HA HA!

WHAT?! THAT CURSED HEDGEHOG, FOREVER A PAIN IN MY--

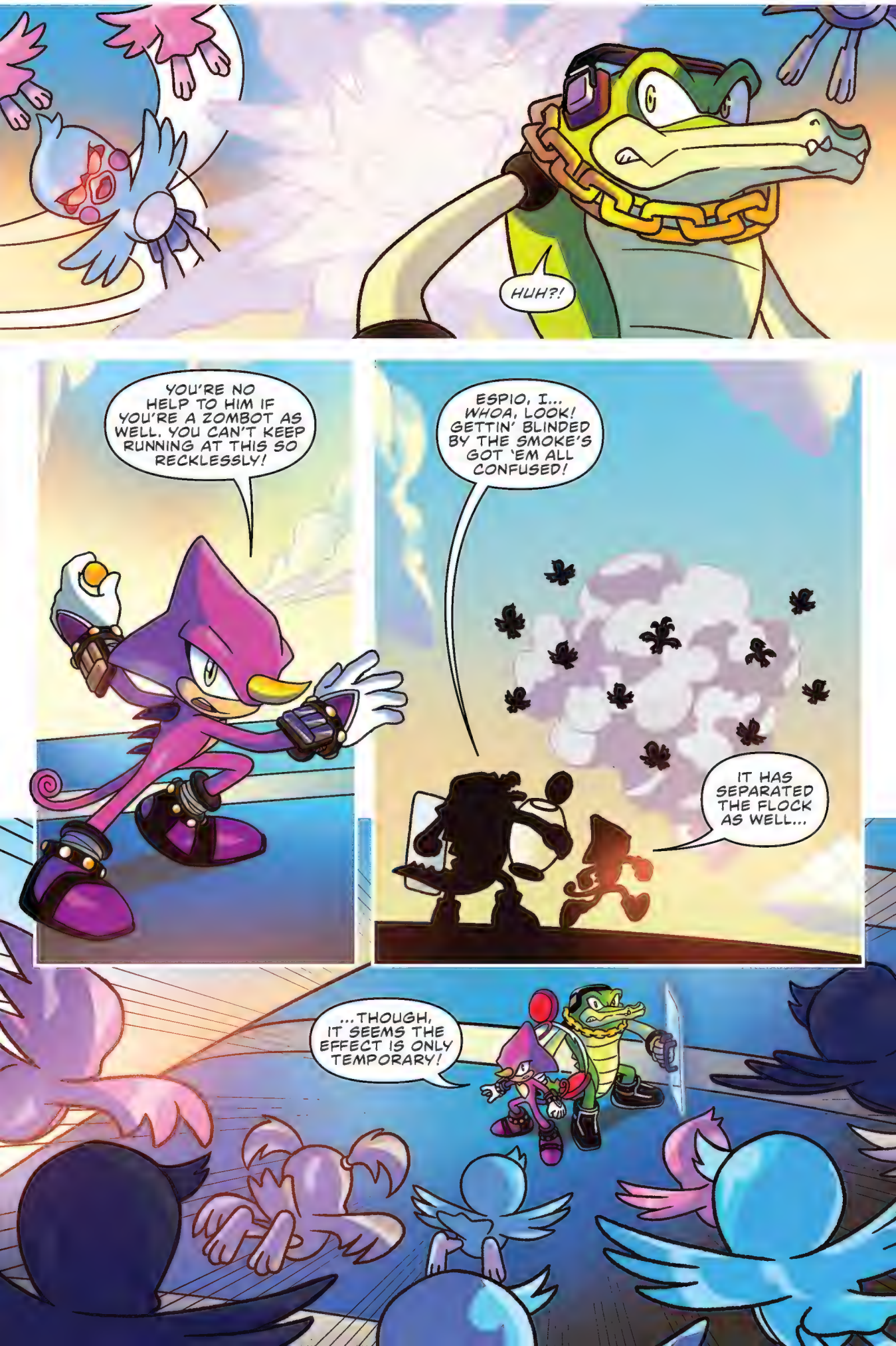
--AHEM. ANYWAY. IT'S NOT ALL HEDGEHOG THIS, AND HEDGEHOG THAT--
--SOMETIMES IT'S THE FOX AND THE CHAMELEON!
SOON, MY ENEMIES WILL BECOME MY ZOMBOTS! NO MORE WILL THEY GET IN MY WAY, BUT RATHER, THEY'LL DO MY BIDDING! HA HA!
INCREDIBLE CRAFTSMANSHIP, DOCTOR!
I'M AWARE!

THESE ARE SO IMPRESSIVE, SO DETAILED, SO--
--UM.
...
IT'S MY DAY OFF, NOT YOURS! TIME FOR YOU TO LEAVE AND GET BACK TO IT!
B-B-BUT!
SLAM
WHAT HAPPENS IN THE EGGCAVE, STAYS IN THE EGGCAVE! KNOCK NEXT TIME!
EGGCAVE

THE CHAOTIX IN FLOCK TOGETHER
UGH! ANOTHER DEAD END!*
*THIS STORY TAKES PLACE BEFORE STH #22-EDS.
CHARMY'S BEEN OUT THERE FOR DAYS! HE'S JUST A KID, AND HE'S ALL ALONE IN THE APOCALYPSE!
HE PROBABLY SAW THE SHIP LEAVE WITHOUT HIM AND THOUGHT WE ABANDONED HIM TO BECOME ONE OF THOSE THINGS AND...
...HOW CAN YOU BE SO CALM, ESPIO?!
GRR...
WE NEED TO KEEP A LEVEL HEAD AND THINK CLEARLY.
BLINDLY SEARCHING IS SENDING US IN CIRCLES. WE'LL HEAD BACK TO RESTORATION HQ TO DROP EVERYONE OFF, AND THEN WE CAN REFUEL AND REGROUP.
...CAN WE AT LEAST GO FASTER?!
I KNOW YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT YOUR FRIEND, BUT WE'RE IN THE FLIGHT PATH OF A LARGE FLICKY MIGRATION. I HAVE TO FLY CAUTIOUSLY.
WE'RE DETECTIVES, VECTOR. SO IS CHARMY.
I BELIEVE IF THERE'S ANYTHING WE CAN FIND, IT'S EACH OTHER.
WHAM

YO, PILOT! WHAT'S THE SHAKE UP?!
THE... THE FLICKIES...
...THEY'RE ZOMBOTS!
WAIT...
"...CHARMY!"
YOU WERE RIGHT, ESPIO! HE FOUND US.
VECTOR, WAIT! WE NEED A PLAN!

LITTLE BUDDY! I'VE BEEN LOOKIN' EVERYWHERE FOR YOU! I PROMISE, WE DIDN'T MEAN TO LEAVE YOU BEHIND! BUT...
...BUT IT'S ALL GOOD NOW! WE'LL TAKE YOU BACK TO HQ AND GET YOU FIXED UP! TAILS IS SMART. HE'LL FIGURE SOMETHING OUT!
DON'T WORRY, CHARMY...
...I GOT... YOU?
I SAID...
...I...
...GOT...
...YOU!


HUH?!
YOU'RE NO HELP TO HIM IF YOU'RE A ZOMBOT AS WELL. YOU CAN'T KEEP RUNNING AT THIS SO RECKLESSLY!
ESPIO, I... WHOA, LOOK! GETTIN' BLINDED BY THE SMOKE'S GOT 'EM ALL CONFUSED!
IT HAS SEPARATED THE FLOCK AS WELL...
...THOUGH, IT SEEMS THE EFFECT IS ONLY TEMPORARY!

GRR... HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO FIGURE OUT A SAFE WAY TO GET TO CHARMY WHEN I CAN'T HEAR MYSELF THINK OVER ALL THESE BIRDS AND THEIR FLAPPIN' AND BUZZIN' AND...
...BUZZIN'! ESPIO, THAT'S IT!
I HAVE A PLAN, IF YOU HAVE MY BACK.
ALWAYS.
FLAP
AHA!
FOUND YA!

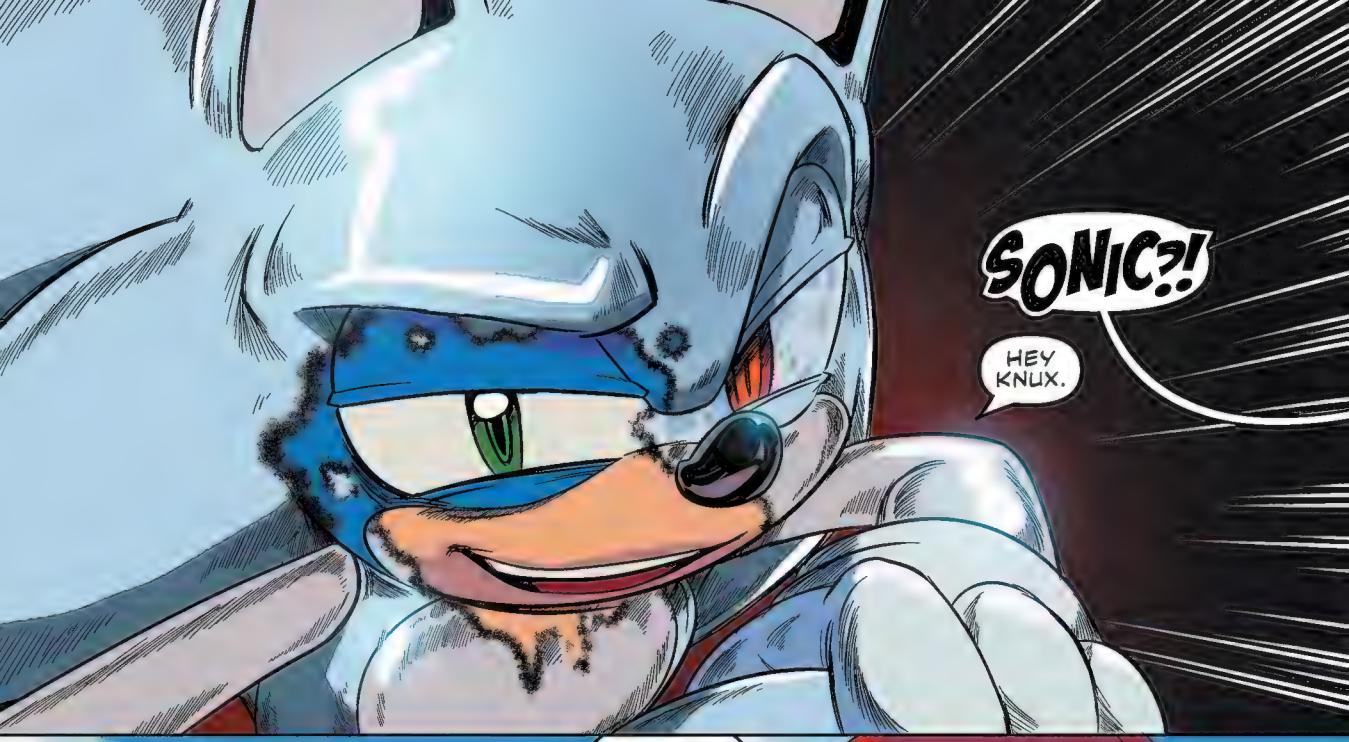
GOT 'IM! LET'S JET!
HA! LOOK AT US! EVEN IN THE ZOMBOT APOCALYPSE...
...THE CHAOTIX ALWAYS FIND WHAT WE'RE LOOKIN' FOR.

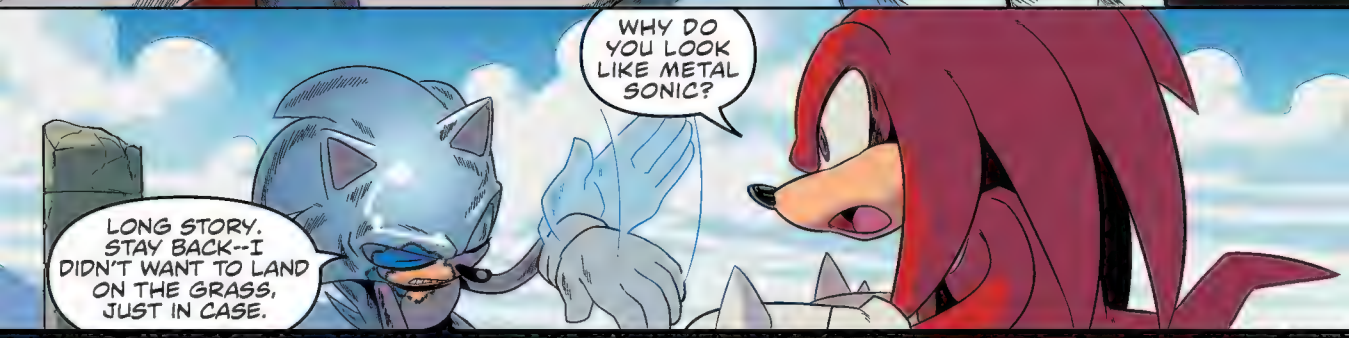
ART BY NATHALIE FOURDRAINE

ART BY TYSON HESSE

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG #25

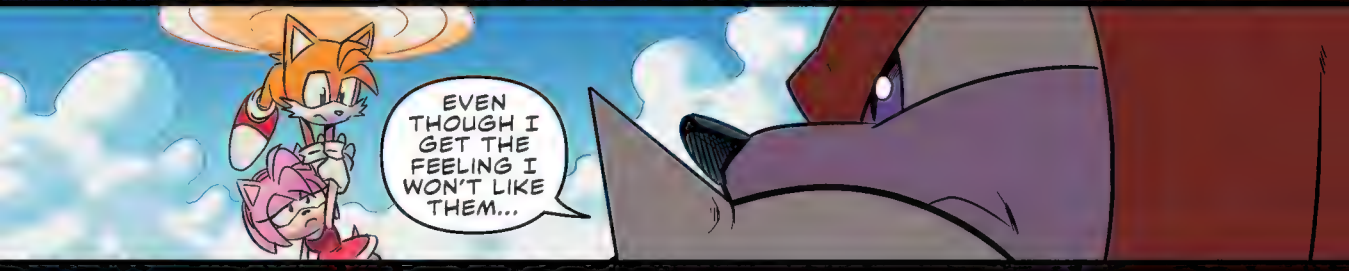
ANGEL ISLAND.
A FLYING PARADISE HIDDEN IN THE CLOUDS, KEPT ALOFT BY THE POWER OF THE MASTER EMERALD.
ITS LOCATION IS SECRET TO ALL BUT A SELECT FEW, INCLUDING ITS SOLE RESIDENT...
...KNUCKLES.
THAT LOOKS LIKE...
...A RESTORATION SHUTTLE?
WHUD


SONIC?!
HEY KNUX.


WHY DO YOU LOOK LIKE METAL SONIC?
LONG STORY. STAY BACK--I DIDN'T WANT TO LAND ON THE GRASS, JUST IN CASE.

WHAT'S WRONG WITH MY GRASS?!
NOTHING. JUST... LOOK, AMY AND TAILS WILL EXPLAIN.
I GOTTA GET BACK UP TO SPEED.

THEY BETTER! I WANT ANSWERS!
WHOOSH


EVEN THOUGH I GET THE FEELING I WON'T LIKE THEM...

MEANWHILE--ABOARD EGGMAN'S FLAGSHIP, THE FACESHIP...
STARLINE! YOU TRAITOR!
NOT AT ALL, SIR. I BROUGHT THE DEADLY SIX HERE TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM YOU COULD NOT.
I'LL DEAL WITH YOU LATER! METAL SONIC! DESTROY FOR DADDY!

TSK TSK
HONESTLY, DOCTOR. YOU KNOW WE CAN CONTROL YOUR ROBOTS. AND YET YOU SEND ONE TO ATTACK?
PRECISELY WHY I BROUGHT YOU HERE.
YOU SIX WILL KEEP THE ZOMBOTS UNDER CONTROL WHILE EGGMAN RESEARCHES A BETTER WAY TO CONTAIN THE METAL VIRUS.
YOU SEE, DOCTOR? I AM MAKING UP FOR YOUR LACK OF FORESIGHT WITH...
...EXCUSE ME.
BWOOOOW

>HUFF< BACK IN LINE >HUFF< BEAST...
THOK
WHAT WAS THAT ABOUT A "LACK OF FORESIGHT?"

BUT... THE CONCH...
IT ONLY WORKS AS LONG AS YOUR LUNGS LAST, IDIOT!
THEN WE'LL REMOVE THOSE FIRST.
NOW THEN, HOW DID YOU PUT IT? AH, YES...
METAL SONIC. DESTROY FOR DADDY.
AAAHH!
SNAP
RRRAAUUGH! WE HAD HIM! HOW ARE WE SUPPOSED TO RIP HIM TO SHREDS NOW?!
HMM...
WE SHIFT OUR PRIORITIES...

WE'VE LOST EGGMAN, BUT WE GAINED HIS FLYING FORTRESS.
WE TOOK HIS MEANS TO CREATE THE METAL VIRUS. AND PERHAPS MOST IMPORTANT OF ALL...
...WE HAVE THE FABLED CHAOS EMERALDS!
HUZ-ZAH. SO WHAT DO WE DO WITH THEM?
THEY'RE SO... SHINY AND BEAUTIFUL. UGH. I CAN'T STAND THEM.
BUT THEIR POWER'S IRREFUTABLE.
RRAAUGH!
LIKE ALL THINGS, WE TAKE THEIR POWER AS OUR OWN.

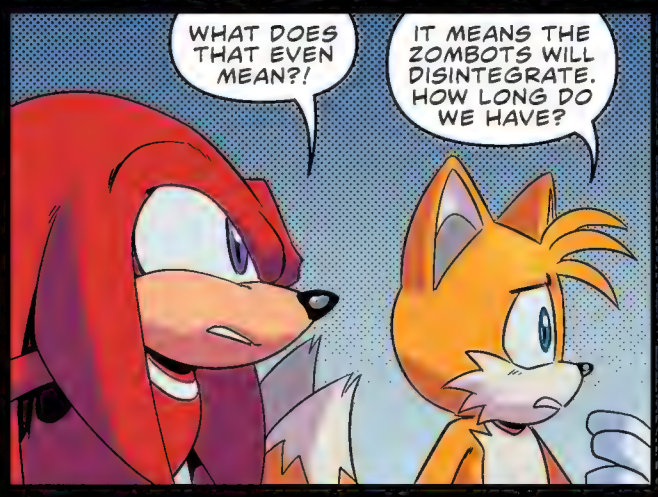
BRAVO! A-PLUS PLAN, NEW BOSS!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
SAVING OUR SERVOS, DUMMY! PLAY ALONG SO HE DOESN'T TAKE CONTROL OF US!
OH! I GET IT! WE'RE ONLY PRETENDING TO LIKE HIS EVIL, CRAZY PLAN!
PRECISELY! JUST ACT LIKE HE'S EGGMAN WHEN HE'S IN ONE OF HIS MOODS.
SO... LIKE MOST DAYS?
YOU WOULD SERVE ME FREELY?
OF COURSE, NEW BOSS. WE REALLY ARE QUITE SPINELESS, BOTH LITERALLY AND FIGURATIVELY.
HA! THEN TAKE US TOWARDS THE LARGEST KNOWN POCKETS OF SURVIVORS.
AS YOU COMMAND. I'LL BE SURE TO LOG YOUR ORDERS SO YOU'RE ALL WELL-COORDINATED, TOO.

VERY WELL THEN. LET'S BEGIN.
ALONE, EACH OF US COULD COMMAND A FEW DOZEN ZOMBOTS AT MOST.
EMPOWERED BY THE EMERALDS, WE'LL COMMAND THOUSANDS.
"STARLINE HAD THE RIGHT OF IT. WE WILL COMMAND THE ZOMBOT HORDE.
"INSTEAD OF RANDOM, SHAMBLING MASSES, WE WILL ORCHESTRATE TIDES OF TERROR ACROSS THE WORLD.
"WE WILL BRING TOTAL, UTTER DEVASTATION TO THE WORLD EGGMAN AND SONIC HAVE FOUGHT OVER FOR SO LONG."
ONCE EVERY LIVING THING HAS BEEN INFECTED, AND NEITHER EGGMAN NOR SONIC HAS ANYWHERE LEFT TO RUN, THEN WE WILL GIVE THEM THE MERCY OF A SLOW END...
...BY THE CORRUPTED MASSES THEY SOUGHT TO CONQUER OR PROTECT!

BACK ON ANGEL ISLAND...
HEY. YOU UP TO SPEED, KNUX?
UGH... YOU'VE SURE BROUGHT TROUBLE TO MY ISLAND. AGAIN.
OH, THANK HEAVENS! WE'RE OUT OF RANGE OF ZAVOK'S CONTROL!
AND IN EVEN WORSE TROUBLE.
HOLD ON, AMY.
WHAT?! SONIC, AFTER ALL HE'S DONE, YOU CAN'T--!
EGGMAN HAS HAD EVERY ADVANTAGE.
WHY WOULD HE COME TO US WITHOUT HIS ARMY? HIS EGG MOBILE? HIS ANYTHING?
SOMETHING HAPPENED. HE'S GOING TO GIVE US A STRAIGHT ANSWER. OR I'LL INFECT HIM MYSELF.
PEA-BRAIN LET THE DEADLY SIX ONTO THE FACESHIP. THEY TOOK OVER EVERYTHING!
A GOOD IDEA! JUST... LACKING IN EXECUTION...
WHY SHOULD WE TRUST A SINGLE WORD EITHER OF YOU SAY?
EVERYONE! I JUST GOT WORD FROM ROUGE! HURRY!

SOON...
GLAD TO HEAR FROM YOU, ROUGE!
EGGMAN, STARLINE, AND METAL SONIC JUST APPEARED ON ANGEL ISLAND.
AH, FIGURES.
TURNS OUT EGGMAN WAS POWERING HIS SHIP WITH ALL SEVEN CHAOS EMERALDS. ZAVOK HAS DISTRIBUTED THEM TO THE REST OF THE DEADLY SIX AND SENT THEM OUT INTO THE WORLD.
WITH THAT KIND OF POWER, THE WORLD IS IN SERIOUS TROUBLE.
EXACTLY HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN ON MY SHIP?
A FEW DAYS. I ALMOST HAD A PLAN TO STEAL THE EMERALDS WHEN THE DEADLY SIX ARRIVED.
NOW I'M COORDINATING WITH ORBOT TO SPY ON THEIR DEPLOYMENTS AND COORDINATE OUR COUNTER-ATTACK.
SIGH I CAN'T HIRE GOOD HELP, BUT I SURE CAN BUILD IT.
YOU DON'T GET TO GLOAT! TELL US HOW TO CURE THE METAL VIRUS RIGHT NOW!
YOU CAN'T!
YES, YOU CAN! I HAD A CURE BUT LOST MY RESEARCH!
FINE! I DON'T HAVE ONE! I DON'T NEED IT!

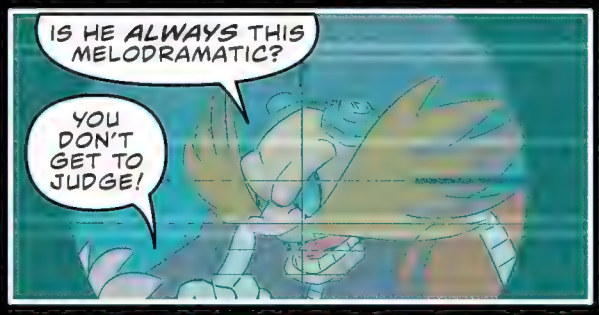
MY RESEARCH FOUND THAT AS THE METAL VIRUS MUTATES, IT BECOMES UNSUSTAINABLE.
ANY INFECTED HETEROTROPHIC EUKARYOTE CELLS WILL EVENTUALLY SUFFER A FORM OF APOPTOSIS. AUTOTROPHIC CELLS WILL ENDURE SLIGHTLY LONGER, BUT NOT BY MUCH.

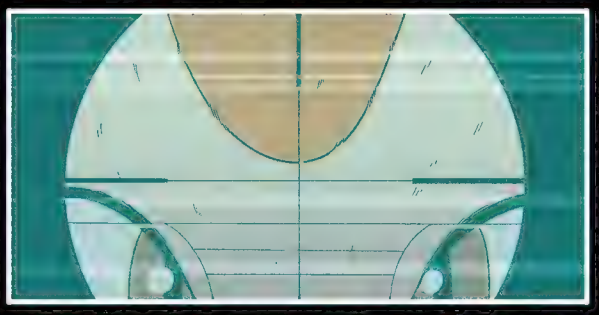

WHAT DOES THAT EVEN MEAN?!
IT MEANS THE ZOMBOTS WILL DISINTEGRATE. HOW LONG DO WE HAVE?

EH, TWO HUNDRED YEARS, GIVE OR TAKE. I'LL HAVE EVACUATED TO A DIFFERENT PLANET WELL BEFORE THEN.
HE'S RIGHT.

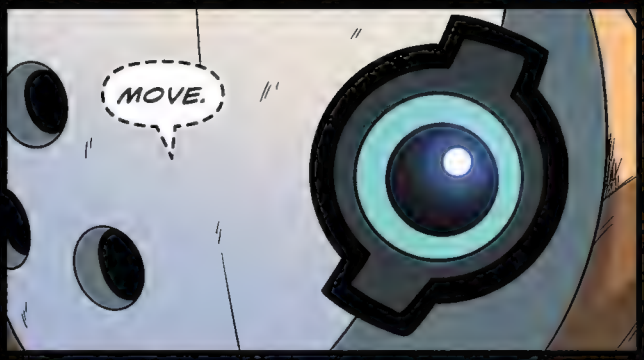
IN MY TIME, ALL THAT WAS LEFT WERE RUINS AND METALLIC PLANTS. THE FUTURE I CAME TO STOP IS ALREADY COMING TO PASS!
BECAUSE OF *THIS MONSTER!*

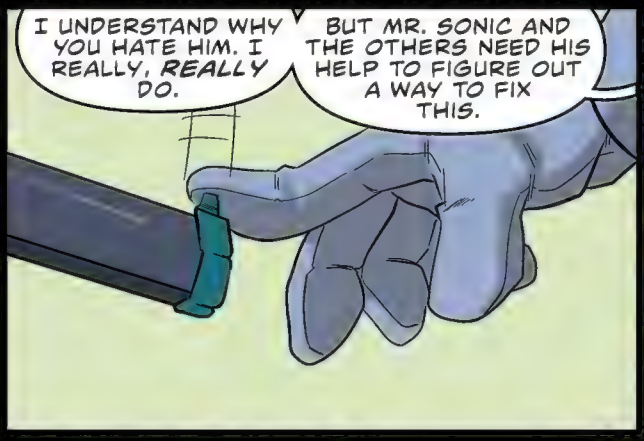
SILVER! YOU'RE HURT! WHERE IS EVERYONE FROM ICE PARADISE?
THE SHUTTLE WENT DOWN TO ZOMBOTS. I... I COULDN'T SAVE ANYONE.
IS MY TIME DOOMED BECAUSE OF MY FAILURES HERE?


IS HE ALWAYS THIS MELODRAMATIC?
YOU DON'T GET TO JUDGE!



PLEASE DON'T, MISS WHISPER.
AGREED. EGGMAN IS MINE TO DESTROY.


MOVE.


I UNDERSTAND WHY YOU HATE HIM. I REALLY, REALLY DO.
BUT MR. SONIC AND THE OTHERS NEED HIS HELP TO FIGURE OUT A WAY TO FIX THIS.

I... I WANT TO SEE MY MOTHER AGAIN. AND CHEESE, AND CHOCOLA, AND EVERYONE ELSE.
I KNOW I'M ASKING A LOT. BUT I'D GIVE ANYTHING TO HAVE THEM BACK. AREN'T THEY WORTH IT?

THANK YOU.
WE'LL STAY WITH YOU SO YOU WON'T BE LONELY.
I AM NOT LONELY. I AM *ENRAGED*.

SOON...
OKAY, SO WE DON'T HAVE A WAY TO MAKE A CURE. THINK, PEOPLE. BECAUSE I'M RUNNING ON FUMES HERE.
LET'S TACKLE THE ISSUE IN MANAGEABLE PORTIONS. PERHAPS THE MASTER EMERALD COULD NEUTRALIZE THE DEADLY SIX?
NO, WE CAN'T MOVE IT WITHOUT RISKING THE WHOLE ISLAND, AND WE CERTAINLY CAN'T LURE THEM HERE. IT'S TOO MUCH OF A GAMBLE.
AND YOU'RE NOT TOUCHING IT.
PERHAPS CHAOS CONTROL, THEN?
SHADOW WAS MUCH BETTER AT IT THAN ME. AND IT ONLY MOVES A TARGET OVER A LIMITED RANGE. IT CAN'T CHANGE THINGS.
BUT MAYBE IF YOU WERE SUPER SONIC! COULD IT WORK THEN?
I DON'T THINK SO. BEING SUPER SONIC MEANS THE CHAOS EMERALDS GIVE ME UNLIMITED POWER, BUT I CAN'T JUST DO ANYTHING WITH IT.
HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN THE CHAOS EMERALDS ARE SCATTERED TO THE WINDS WITH THE DEADLY SIX?
ONE THING AT A TIME. I DON'T HEAR YOU COMING UP WITH ANY BRIGHT IDEAS.

I WANTED YOU ALL TO EXHAUST YOURSELVES OF YOUR BAD IDEAS FIRST.
IT'S SIMPLE-- WE'LL USE THE WARP TOPAZ!
STARLINE TOLD ME HIMSELF THAT IT CAN CAUSE MASSIVE CHANGES WITH JUST A LITTLE CHARGE!
PUMP THE POWER OF SUPER SONIC THROUGH IT, AND HE CAN WARP THE VIRUS AWAY IN ONE FELL SWOOP!
DID YOU FORGET THE CHAOS EMERALDS ARE "SCATTERED TO THE WINDS" WITH THE DEADLY SIX?
ONE THING AT A TIME.
YOU'LL HAVE TO THINK OF SOMETHING ELSE, BECAUSE I WON'T ALLOW IT!
YOU TALK AS IF YOU HAVE A SAY IN THE MATTER.
AS THE ONLY EXPERT ON THE WARP TOPAZ, I MOST CERTAINLY DO! WHAT YOU'RE PROPOSING IS EXCEEDINGLY RECKLESS!

CREATING AND DIRECTING MY WARP PORTALS IS DIFFICULT! THE COMPONENTS OF MY GLOVE WERE BUILT AFTER COUNTLESS HOURS OF CAREFUL TESTING!
SUPER SONIC USING THE WARP TOPAZ RECKLESSLY COULD UNDO THE METAL VIRUS--OR IT COULD WARP SPACE-TIME SO BADLY THE ENTIRE PLANET COLLAPSES!
WE HAVE A SAFE HAVEN HERE! WE HAVE RESOURCES! WE CAN PUT IN THE WORK AND FIND A SAFE, RESPONSIBLE WAY TO REGAIN CONTROL OF THE SITUATION!
WE CAN STILL WIN!
THE RODENT IS LIVING ON BORROWED TIME! THIS PLACE WON'T BE SAFE FOR MUCH LONGER!
AND I'LL TAKE ANY RISK TO ENSURE THOSE BLASTED ZETI DON'T USE MY OWN GENIUS AGAINST ME! WE DON'T HAVE ANY BETTER OPTION!
WE'RE ENDING THIS!
NO.
I'LL FIGURE OUT A WAY TO FINISH WHAT YOU STARTED. YOU CAN THANK ME LATER.

THANK YOU, METAL.
STARLINE? YOU'RE FIRED.
ARE WE OKAY WITH THIS...?
THE GUY BROUGHT EGGMAN BACK TO HIS OLD SELF AND TRIED TO BLOW ME AND SILVER UP.
YEAH. WE'RE OKAY WITH THIS.
NOW! ON TO THE BUSINESS OF THE CHAOS EMERALDS. TWO ARE ON THE FACESHIP. ONE POWERS IT, WHILE THE OTHER IS WITH ZAVOK.
ROUGE IS AN EXPERT JEWEL THIEF. I'M SURE SHE CAN HANDLE THOSE.

THAT LEAVES FIVE OF THE DEADLY SIX TO DEAL WITH. FORMIDABLE OPPONENTS ON THEIR OWN, BUT NOW EMPOWERED BY THE CHAOS EMERALDS...
SO? WE STILL HAVE EACH OTHER. WE'LL OVERWHELM THEM ONE AT A TIME.
ROUGE SAID THEY WERE ALL NETWORKED THROUGH THE FACESHIP, THOUGH. IF ONE MANAGES TO WARN THE OTHERS, THAT'S IT.
SO WE HAVE TO HIT THEM ALL AT ONCE. HMM...
THAT WON'T BE A PROBLEM. I CAN SCAVENGE MATERIALS FROM THE SHUTTLE AND USE THE WARP TOPAZ TO BUILD A MULTI-PORTAL GENERATOR.
WITH ROUGE AND ORBOT'S COUNTER-INTELLIGENCE, I CAN SEND YOU ALL TO YOUR EXACT TARGETS.
THAT'S NOT THE ONLY ISSUE, THOUGH. IT WOULD BE BETTER IF EVERYONE HAD A BACKUP IN CASE...
...Y'KNOW...
YEAH, I DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH FIGHT I'VE GOT LEFT IN ME. AS SUPER SONIC I'LL BE FINE, BUT RIGHT NOW...?
I'VE GOT AN IDEA! LET ME MAKE A CALL!
"CALL?" WHO'S LEFT TO ASK FOR HELP?

SOON...
REALLY? YOU CALLED THE BABYLON ROGUES?
THEY'RE THIEVES AND THEY SPEND ALL DAY ON A BLIMP. WHO ELSE WOULD'VE AVOIDED THE PLAGUE AND WOULD BE PERFECT FOR STEALING CHAOS EMERALDS?
SONIC THE HEDGEHOG! YOU'RE LOOKING MORE PATHETIC THAN EVER.
CHARMING AS EVER, JET. YOU GOING TO HELP US OR WHAT?
MAYBE. IF THE REWARD'S BIG ENOUGH.
JET, IF WE DON'T HELP THEM OUT, WHERE ARE WE GOING TO REFUEL? HOW ARE WE GOING TO EAT? WHO ARE WE GOING TO STEAL FROM?!
PEH. WE CAN FIGURE ALL THAT OUT WITHOUT STOOPING TO BEING GOODIE-GOODIES.
BACK OFF, WAVE. IF THE BOSS SAYS WE AIN'T GONNA DO IT, WE AIN'T GONNA DO IT!
THANKS, STORM.
...BUT I DO LIKE TO EAT.
GRRR

JET... I GET IT. YOU'VE GOT AN IMAGE TO MAINTAIN. YOUR OWN WAY OF DOING THINGS.
BUT THE FACT OF THE MATTER IS I CAN'T DO THIS WITHOUT YOU. I NEED YOUR HELP, JET.
AND THE WORLD NEEDS THE LEGENDARY WIND MASTER.
WELL IF THAT'S THE CASE, WHO AM I TO DENY THE WORLD THEIR SAVIOR?
COME ON! TELL ME WHAT I CAN DO THAT SONIC CAN'T!
DON'T WORRY. I WON'T TELL KNUCKLES.
EH, MY EGO'S BEEN TAKING A BEATING FOR DAYS.
I NEED TO GO FOR A RUN, BUT I'LL BE BACK FOR DEPLOYMENT.

RIVERSIDE.
"HOPEFULLY WE CAN END THIS BEFORE IT GETS TOO MUCH WORSE..."
WOO-HA-HA-HA-HA!
THAT'S RIGHT! TEAR IT ALL DOWN! LEAVE NOTHIN' STANDING!
OOH! TRYIN' TO HIDE? WELL TOO BAD! BEAT THE METAL VIRUS INTO 'EM!
THIS IS BARELY A SNACK!
VISTA VIEW.
I-IT'S ALL W-WE HAVE LEFT IN TOWN...
NO! WAIT! I CAN-- AHHH!
IT'S SIMPLE! I'M HUNGRY! FEED ME OR I FEED YOU TO THE ZOMBOTS!
NOW GET COOKIN'!

ORCHARDVILLE.
NOTHING ELSE QUITE PLEASES ME AS AN UNANSWERED MERCY PLEA
THE CRYING, SCREAMING, FRANTIC WAILS AS ALL LIGHT OF HOPE FLICKERS AND FAILS.
OOOH... A HEROIC FINAL STAND? HOW POINTLESS.
GATHER 'ROUND THEM, TAKE THE CHILDREN AWAY, HE WILL WATCH, THEY ALL SHALL PAY.
SUNSET CITY.
UGH--THIS IS ALL THIS TOWN HAS TO OFFER? IT WAS A WASTELAND BEFORE I EVEN GOT HERE.
YOU. WHY ISN'T THE SHOPPING HERE ANY BETTER?
I... UM... NOTHING CAN SUIT SOMEONE AS RADIANT AS YOU?
MMM--GOOD ANSWER! I'LL SPARE YOU FOR ANOTHER HOUR. AS FOR THE REST OF YOU...?
PRAISE ZEENA!

WINTERBURG.
FORWARD, MY MINIONS! LET NO HEARTBEAT GO UNNOTICED! LET NO WARM BREATH BE UNPUNISHED!
THE INVASION GOES WELL, ZAVOK. I CAN SEE THE VIRUS SPREADING THROUGH THE FORESTS BEYOND. I DARE SAY THIS CONTINENT WILL BE FULLY CONVERTED IN A FEW DAYS.
PROFICIENCY I COULD ONLY EXPECT FROM YOU, MASTER.
IS THERE MORE YOU CAN BE DOING?
I ASSURE YOU, I AM NOT RESTING ON MY LAURELS, MASTER. I WILL SEE TO IT WE'VE INFECTED EVERYTHING FROM COAST TO COAST BY TONIGHT...
"...TOMORROW-- THE WORLD!"

ART BY NATHALIE FOURDRAINE

ART BY EVAN STANLEY

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG #26

BAH! THIS ISN'T REMOTELY UP TO MY AESTHETIC STANDARDS.
LET'S FOCUS ON MAKING SURE IT WORKS AND DOESN'T IMPLODE THE ISLAND.
EUREKA! WE HAVE A FUNCTIONING MULTI-PORTAL GENERATOR!
WAIT, "IMPLODE?" THAT WAS A POSSIBILITY?!
ANGEL ISLAND-- THE LAST SAFE HAVEN FROM THE METAL VIRUS.

THE BRAINIACS GOT IT WORKING?
YEAH! DID YOU FIGURE OUT WHO SHOULD TAKE ON EACH OF THE DEADLY SIX?
YUP, I THINK--
I'M SHUFFE FINE. LET'S GET EVERYONE MOVING.
YOU'LL BE SPLITTING INTO TEAMS WHERE YOU CAN. TAILS AND AMY WILL TAKE ON ZOMOM.
THE DUDE IS DUMB AS A BRICK. YOU TWO SHOULD BE ABLE TO OUTWIT HIM AND TAKE HIS CHAOS EMERALD NO PROBLEM.
ESPIO AND KNUCKLES, YOU GET ZAZZ. THE GUY'S A BERSERKER.
YOU TWO ARE THE BEST TRAINED FIGHTERS, SO YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO OVERCOME HIS BRUTE STRENGTH.
NOPE.

WANNA TRY THAT AGAIN, KNUX?
THAT WOULD LEAVE THE MASTER EMERALD WITH EGGMAN AND METAL SONIC. AS ITS GUARDIAN, I'M NOT GOING TO DO THAT.
EVERYONE IS GOING OFF ON SUICIDE MISSIONS. YOU'RE IN NO SHAPE TO FIGHT.
SO-- NOPE.
ARE YOU IMPLYING I'D DOUBLE-CROSS YOU ALL AT THIS CRITICAL JUNCTURE?
YEAH, I'M GOING WITH "NOPE" TOO.
IT'S FINE. VECTOR AND CHARMY FACED THE HORRORS OF THE ZOMBOTS ON THEIR OWN. I CAN DO NO LESS.
I ALREADY HAVE A TACTIC IN MIND.

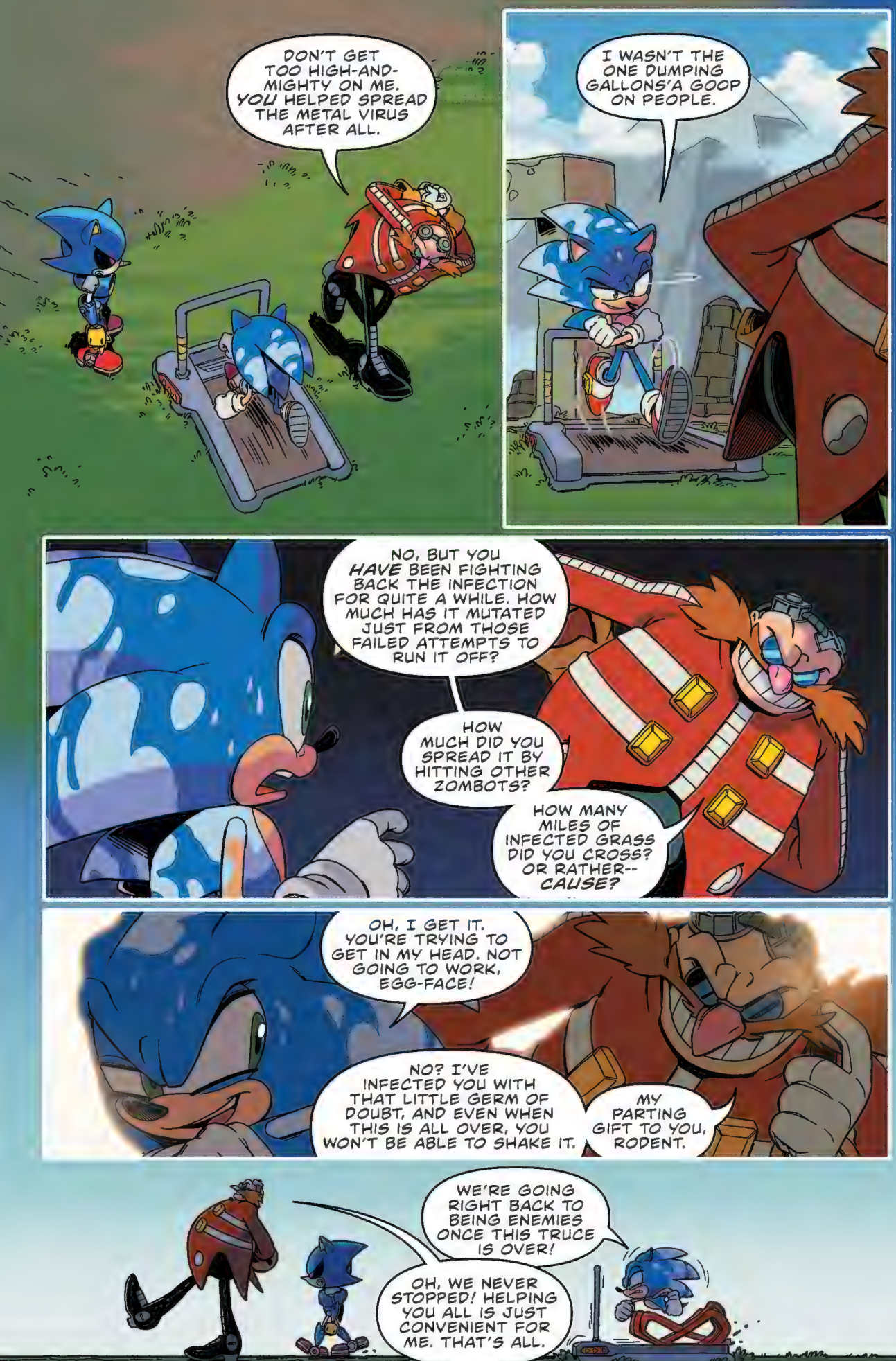
SILVER AND WHISPER, YOU GET ZOR. THE GUY IS... WEIRD. BETTER YOU TWO HANDLE HIM AT A DISTANCE.
ROGER.
FIGHTING SIDE-BY-SIDE WITH THE GUARDIAN ANGEL OF THE BATTLEFIELD AGAIN!
ZEENA THINKS WAY TOO HIGHLY OF HERSELF. SHE'LL UNDERESTIMATE WHOEVER COMES FOR HER.
GEMERL, IT'S RISKY, BUT USE THAT TO YOUR ADVANTAGE.
UNDERSTOOD.
WHAT ABOUT ME? I WANT TO HELP TOO!
IT IS TOO DANGEROUS.
BUT--!
YOU HAVE PROVEN TO BE VERY BRAVE ALREADY. I WILL NOT--CANNOT--LOSE YOU, TOO.

THAT LEAVES ZIK TO THE BABYLON ROGUES. HE MAY BE TINY AND OLD, BUT THE DUDE IS CRAFTIER THAN THE REST OF THE DEADLY SIX COMBINED.
OH, PLEASE. THE THREE OF US CAN HANDLE GRANDPA NO PROBLEM.
YEAH! I AIN'T AFRAID TO HIT AN OLD MAN!
STAY CLASSY.
IT WILL BE UP TO ROUGE TO STEAL THE FINAL TWO EMERALDS FROM ZAVOK AND ESCAPE THE FACESHIP.
ONCE YOU'VE ALL RETURNED, SONIC WILL USE THE EMERALDS TO TRANSFORM INTO SUPER SONIC AND USE THE WARP TOPAZ TO UNDO THE METAL VIRUS.
UNLESS HE SUCCUMBS TO THE INFECTION FIRST.
DON'T SOUND SO EAGER. YOUR LIFE IS ON THE LINE, TOO.
CORRECT, ERGO--TAILS! WE NEED TO BUILD A TREADMILL FOR SONIC!
SPEED ISN'T DOING IT ANYMORE. AND I'M NOT RISKING YOU COLLAPSING SOMEWHERE ON THIS ISLAND AND WAKING UP A ZOMBOT!
MY SPEED FIGHTS THE INFECTION MORE THAN THE MOTION.

AND SO...
WE'RE ALL PREPARED HERE. HOW ARE THINGS ON THE FACESHIP?
ZAVOK'S BEEN ASKING A LOT OF QUESTIONS, TRYING TO FIGURE OUT WHERE EGGMAN ESCAPED TO. IF WE'RE GOING TO MAKE OUR MOVE, IT NEEDS TO BE SOON.
THIS IS EVERYONE?
IT'S A MIRACLE WE SAVED THIS MANY. THERE ARE MORE ON THE WORLD BELOW...
...BUT THE DEADLY SIX ARE HUNTING THEM DOWN AS WE SPEAK. IF WE FAIL...
YOU WON'T.
BUT... IF WORSE COMES TO WORST, I'LL LOOK AFTER THE SURVIVORS. YOU HAVE MY WORD.

THIS SHOULD IMPROVE STABILITY...
Y'KNOW, IN A WAY, EGGMAN DIDN'T GET A CHANCE TO STAY REFORMED. STARLINE PUT HIM BACK ON THAT PATH.
BUT YOU...
...YOU JUST HAD TO GO BACK TO HIM, DIDN'T YOU?
YOU COULDN'T BE LIKE GEMERL OR OMEGA. YOU JUST HAD TO BE A ONE-NOTE JERK.

OH-HO-HO! DID YOU REALLY THINK NEUTRALIZING METAL WOULD MAKE HIM LESS OF A THREAT?
WELL... YEAH. HE HAD NOTHING LEFT TO FIGHT FOR, AND NO WAY TO FIGHT.
YOU MAY HAVE NEUTRALIZED HIS HARDWARE, BUT HIS SOFTWARE DEMANDS BATTLE AND CONQUEST!
HIS SOLE DESIRE FROM THAT POINT ON WOULD BE TO BECOME DANGEROUS AGAIN!
WE DIDN'T THINK ANYONE COULD RESTORE HIM, THOUGH.
AND YOU WERE RIGHT!
BUT YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT STARLINE. YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT MY GLORIOUS RETURN.
AND LOOK WHERE THAT GOT YOU!
YEAH--YOU WERE LIVING HAPPILY AND PEACEFULLY AS MR. TINKER. YOU WERE BRINGING JOY TO OTHERS.
WHAT A WASTE, RIGHT?
WHEN ARE YOU GOING TO LET THAT GO?!
NOT UNTIL YOU GET A CLUE AND COME AROUND, DOC.

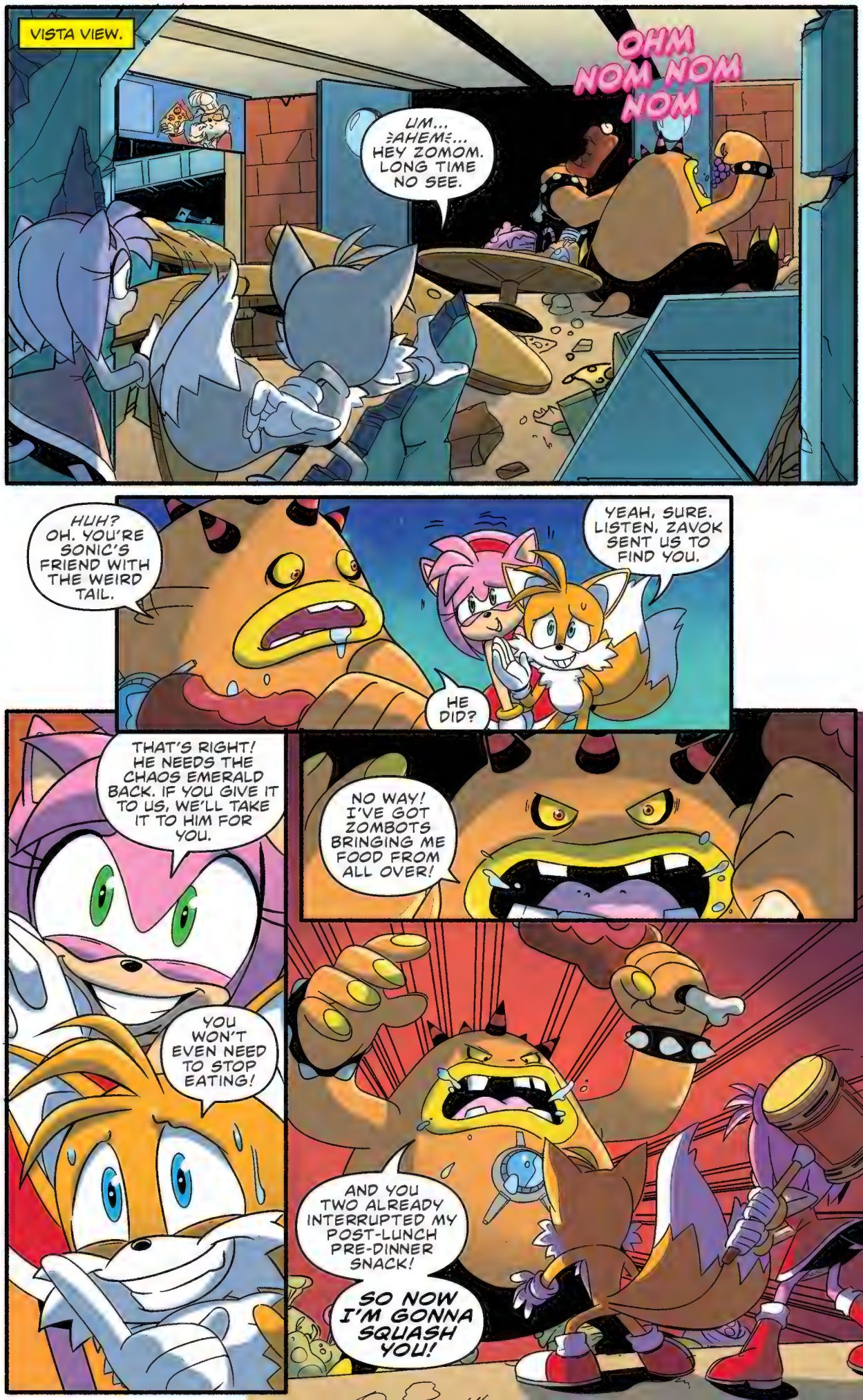

DON'T GET TOO HIGH-AND-MIGHTY ON ME. YOU HELPED SPREAD THE METAL VIRUS AFTER ALL.
I WASN'T THE ONE DUMPING GALLONS'A GOOP ON PEOPLE.
NO, BUT YOU HAVE BEEN FIGHTING BACK THE INFECTION FOR QUITE A WHILE. HOW MUCH HAS IT MUTATED JUST FROM THOSE FAILED ATTEMPTS TO RUN IT OFF?
HOW MUCH DID YOU SPREAD IT BY HITTING OTHER ZOMBOTS?
HOW MANY MILES OF INFECTED GRASS DID YOU CROSS? OR RATHER-- CAUSE?
OH, I GET IT. YOU'RE TRYING TO GET IN MY HEAD. NOT GOING TO WORK, EGG-FACE!
NO? I'VE INFECTED YOU WITH THAT LITTLE GERM OF DOUBT, AND EVEN WHEN THIS IS ALL OVER, YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO SHAKE IT.
MY PARTING GIFT TO YOU, RODENT.
WE'RE GOING RIGHT BACK TO BEING ENEMIES ONCE THIS TRUCE IS OVER!
OH, WE NEVER STOPPED! HELPING YOU ALL IS JUST CONVENIENT FOR ME. THAT'S ALL.

...AND THERE ARE NO LIFE-SIGNS AT HIS HIDEOUTS?
NOTHING MORE THAN NESTING FLICKIES AND RICKIES, NEW BOSS.
WHERE DID YOU GO, DOCTOR...
HE WOULDN'T BE SO FOOLISH AS TO HIDE IN MY OWN CASTLE ON LOST HEX. RRRGH! WHERE IS HE?!
BRING UP A LIST OF EVERY LOCATION HE'S HELD A BASE! I DON'T CARE HOW REMOTE OR OBSCURE!
RIGHT AWAY, NEW BOSS.
THESE ARE ALL ON OTHER PLANETS! IF HE FLED THAT FAR, HOW CAN I...
WAIT. WHAT IS "ANGEL ISLAND?"
OH, A FASCINATING ISLAND. SHALL I TELL YOU ALL ABOUT IT? IT WILL TAKE QUITE A WHILE.

UH, SORRY TO INTERRUPT, BUT WE'VE GOT AN ALERT IN THE METAL VIRUS-MAKING-THINGIE.
IF THAT'S SONIC SABOTAGING MY PLANS, I'LL RIP HIM IN HALF!
WOW! YOU WORK FAST!
YOU HAVE TO WHEN YOU'RE OUT OF TIME. SEND AMY THE LATEST COORDINATES OF THE DEADLY SIX. TELL HER THEY NEED TO ATTACK NOW.
RIGHT AWAY. HOW WILL YOU GET THE EMERALD FROM ZAVOK?
I'M STILL WEIGHING MY OPTIONS. JUST KEEP PLAYING ALONG FOR NOW.

OKAY! I'VE GOT ALL THE COORDINATES SET!
WAIT! WAIT! LET ME ADJUST THE PORTAL APERTURES AAAND...
VOIP
VOIP
VOIP
VOIP
GOOD LUCK, EVERYONE. I WISH I COULD COME WITH YOU.

GOOD-BYE, CREAM. I WILL BE BACK SOON.
THIS ISN'T GOOD-BYE, GEMERL...
...BECAUSE I'M GOING TOO!
SUNSET CITY.
WHOA! WHO'S THIS BRAT?
MISS ZEENA! MY NAME IS CREAM! AND YOU'RE BEING VERY MEAN!
GIVE US THE CHAOS EMERALD RIGHT NOW!
"US?" YOU LOOK VERY ALONE, LITTLE GIRL.


VISTA VIEW.
OHM NOM NOM NOM
UM... AHEM... HEY ZOMOM. LONG TIME NO SEE.
HUH? OH. YOU'RE SONIC'S FRIEND WITH THE WEIRD TAIL.
YEAH, SURE. LISTEN, ZAVOK SENT US TO FIND YOU.
HE DID?
NO WAY! I'VE GOT ZOMBOTS BRINGING ME FOOD FROM ALL OVER!
THAT'S RIGHT! HE NEEDS THE CHAOS EMERALD BACK. IF YOU GIVE IT TO US, WE'LL TAKE IT TO HIM FOR YOU.
YOU WON'T EVEN NEED TO STOP EATING!
AND YOU TWO ALREADY INTERRUPTED MY POST-LUNCH PRE-DINNER SNACK!
SO NOW I'M GONNA SQUASH YOU!

RIVERSIDE.
MAAAAAAAN THIS IS LAME. I CAN MAKE THESE ZOMBOTS TEAR INTO EACH OTHER ALL DAY, BUT IT DOESN'T DO ANY DAMAGE.
AND EVERY FUZZY PUNK I THREW INTO THE ARENA GOT CONVERTED, SO THE FUN ONLY LASTS A FEW MINUTES!
I CAN'T ENJOY MY BLOOD SPORTS WITHOUT ANY BLOOD!
SNIFF SNIFF
YOU CAN'T RUN AND YOU SURE CAN'T HIDE!
WOO-HOO-HA-HA! JACKPOT!
IM-IMPOSSIBLE!

ORCHARDVILLE.
DO YOU SEE HIM?
YES. NO CLEAR SHOT. CAN YOU GRAB THE EMERALD FROM HERE?
I CAN'T BE THAT PRECISE...
...BUT I CAN BE DIRECT! COVER ME!
ROGER.
LISTEN UP! I COME FROM A FUTURE RUINED BY THE SELFISH AMBITIONS OF YOU AND YOUR PACK!
GIVE UP THE CHAOS EMERALD, OR I'LL MAKE YOU PAY FOR THE FUTURE TODAY!
HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN PRACTICING THAT LINE, KID?
SO WHAT I'M DOING NOW LEADS TO A FUTURE OF MISERY AND DESTRUCTION?
IT'S ALL I COULD'VE EVER HOPED FOR.

WINTERBURG.
YOU LOT--HEAD EAST. AND YOU--WEST.
THIRD PHALANX--BRING BACK ANY SURVIVORS.
FOURTH PHALANX--BEGIN INFECTING THE FOREST TO THE SOUTH.
HEY, GRAMPS!
TIME FOR YOU TO RETIRE!

MY, MY! YOU FLEDGLINGS HAVE QUITE IMPRESSIVE AIR BOARDS!
PERHAPS I'LL TAKE ONE OF THEM FOR MYSELF.
GET OFF MY EXTREME GEAR!
UH... B-BOSS...?
WHAT'S THE MATTER, GRAMPS?
AFRAID TO FIGHT YOUR OWN BATTLES?!
I RETIRED FROM THE BATTLEFIELD LONG AGO.
BUT I SUPPOSE YOU CHILDREN COULD DO WITH A LESSON IN DISCIPLINE AND HUMILITY.

SENILE OLD FOOL...
...GET HIM!

PRETTY GOOD MOVES-- FOR A RAISIN! GIVE IT UP! I'VE GOT YOU BEAT!
PERHAPS...
...BUT I'VE GOT YOUR FRIENDS!

ART BY NATHALIE FOURDRAINE

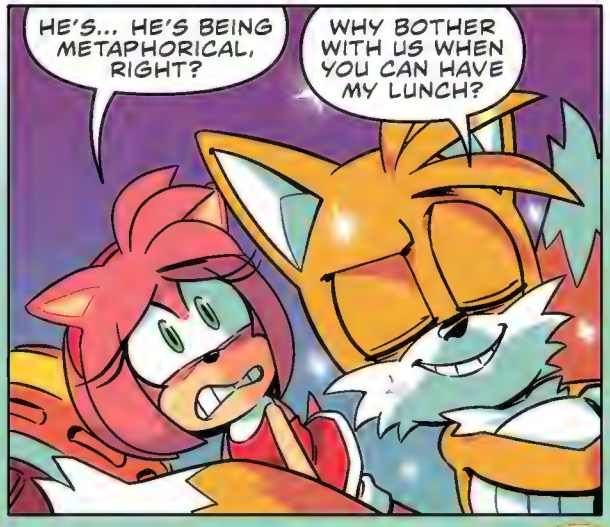
LAMAR + REGGIE
WELLS

VISTA VIEW.
HOW IS SOMEONE THAT BIG *THAT* FAST?!
JUST KEEP RUNNING!

NO!
WE CAME HERE TO GET THAT CHAOS EMERALD AND END THIS NIGHTMARE!
PIKO
NYAH!
I... I CAN'T BELIEVE THAT WORKED!
HRMM... WEIRD FLAVOR...
RONCH
STOP THAT YOU GROSS WEIRDO!

THWAK

OW! I'M GONNA CHEW YOU EXTRA HARD BEFORE SWALLOWING!


HE'S... HE'S BEING METAPHORICAL, RIGHT?
WHY BOTHER WITH US WHEN YOU CAN HAVE MY LUNCH?

HUH?
I DROPPED IT WHILE YOU WERE CHASING US. WHICH IS TOO BAD, BECAUSE IT LOOKED REALLY YUMMY!

OOH! WHERE?! WHERE?! I'M STARVING!

TAILS, WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO?
ZOMOM IS TOO STRONG FOR US TO TAKE DOWN, AND TOO STUPID TO OUTWIT!
I DON'T KNOW! SONIC MADE THIS LOOK WAY EASIER BEFORE.
HE SEEMS EASILY DISTRACTED. WHAT IF ONE OF US BAITED HIM WHILE THE OTHER GRABBED THE EMERALD?
IT'S RISKY, BUT IT'S WORTH A SHOT!
RAAAA
THERE'S NOTHING HERE!
YOU LIED TO ME!

NOW YOU MADE ME HUNGRY AND ANGRY!
I'M HANGRY! YOU WOULDN'T LIKE ME WHEN I'M HANGRY!
YOW! TIME TO GET TO HIGHER GROUND!
I DON'T THINK THAT'S GOING TO WORK!

SUNSET CITY.
G-GEMERL...?
HAHAHA! HE CAN'T HEAR YOU ANYMORE, BRAT!

YOU BROUGHT A ROBOT TO FIGHT ME WHEN YOU KNEW I COULD CONTROL MACHINES?
HONESTLY, HOW STUPID ARE YOU?

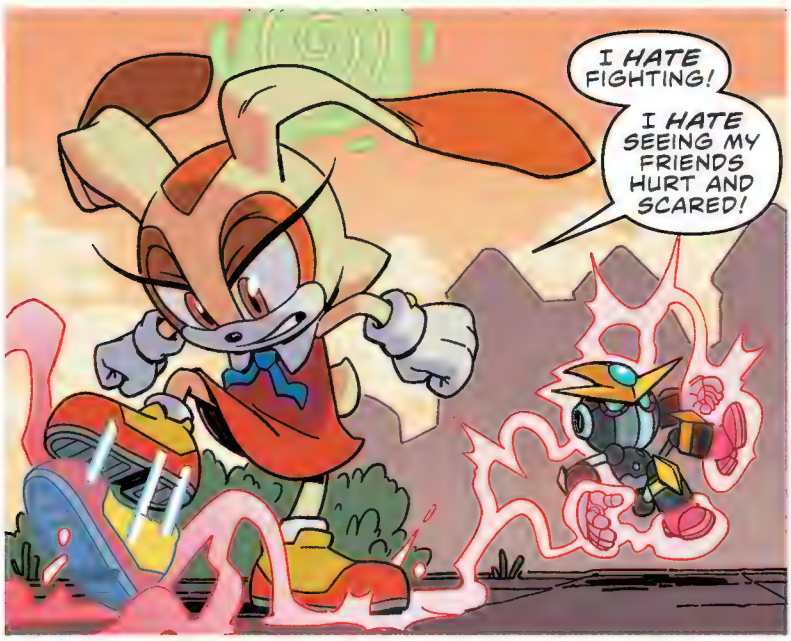
P-PLEASE DON'T DO IT!
I KNOW YOU WANTED ME TO STAY BEHIND! BUT IT WAS BECAUSE YOU WANTED ME TO BE SAFE! REMEMBER?!

THE GEMERL I KNOW IS TOO TOUGH TO BE PUSHED AROUND! YOU HAVE A KIND HEART!

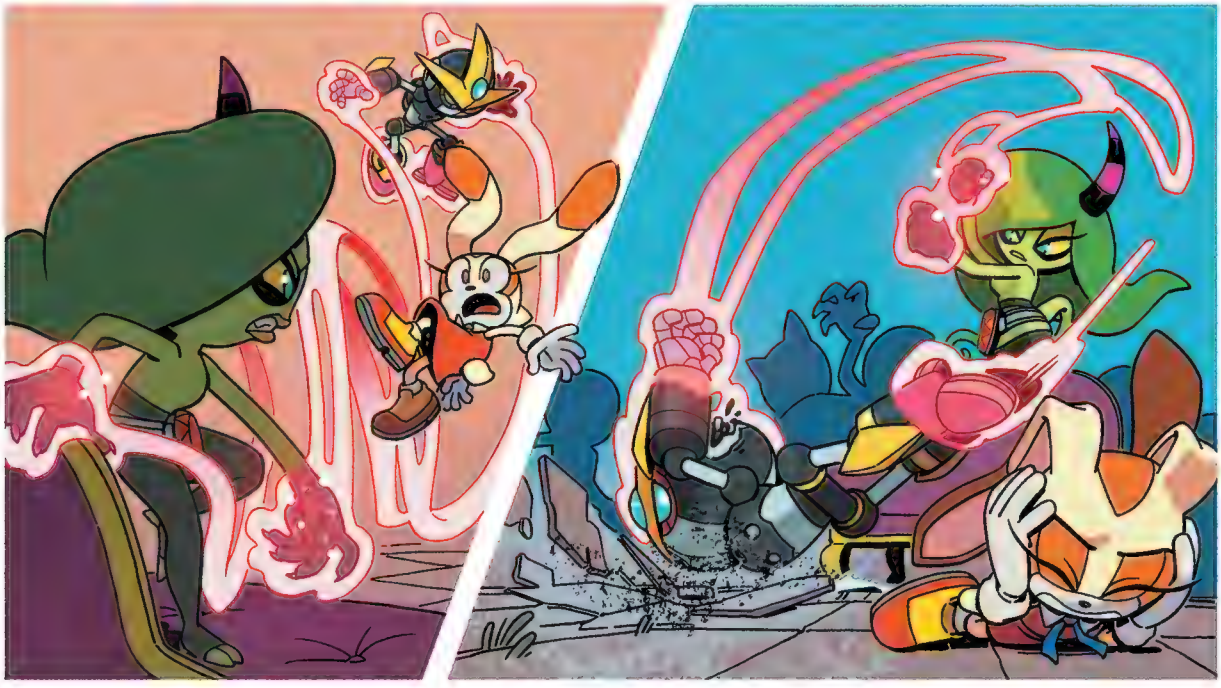
I BELIEVE IN YOU, GEMERL! I KNOW YOU WILL LISTEN TO YOUR HEART!

GRUNCH
YOU DID IT!
FOREIGN SIGNAL IDENTIFIED. WIRELESS RECEIVER CRITICALLY DAMAGED. ELECTRO-MAGNETIC SIGNALS DISRUPTED.
BUT YOU HEARD ME!
...YES.
UGH! YOU'RE MAKING ME GET UP AND WORK.
FINE! IF YOU'RE GOING TO MAKE ME GET MY HANDS DIRTY...
...I'M GONNA HAVE SOME FUN WITH IT!
KZZT
GEMERL!

FIGHT HER!
EXTERNAL INFERENCE! CANNOT OVERRIDE! DUCK!
VWEE-VWEE-VWEE
ZOOM
YOU... HIT ME!


I HATE FIGHTING!
I HATE SEEING MY FRIENDS HURT AND SCARED!

AND I HATE HOW MEAN YOU ARE!



GEMERL! NO!

THOK
I KNOW YOUR TYPE. THE GOOD LITTLE GIRL WHO WORKS SO HARD TO PLEASE EVERYONE.
YOU THINK YOU'RE SO MUCH BETTER THAN ME BECAUSE YOU'VE GOT THE MORAL HIGH GROUND, HUH?
HAHAH! WHAT'S THE MATTER? I THOUGHT YOU'D BE FRIENDS WITH EVERYONE!
LOOK WHERE ALL THAT GOT YOU, SWEETIE.

VISTA VIEW.
WE CAN'T KEEP THIS UP!
I'M THINKING! I'M THINKING!
ARGH! YOU TWO ARE SO ANNOYING!
RRRUMBLE

TAILS!
BOOM
ARE YOU OKAY?
YEAH, JUST WORN OUT.
BUT WE'VE GOT TO KEEP MOVING!
NO, WE NEED TO STAY RIGHT HERE!

HOLD IT...
...WAIT FOR IT...
...NOW!
PIKO
BRAK
CRASH

OOOOGH...
HOW DO YOU LIKE THAT? OVERPOWERED...
...AND OUT-SMARTED.
HEY! GET BACK HERE! WITHOUT THAT I CAN'T CONTROL THE--!
...OH.

SUNSET CITY.
MY ARM'S STARTING TO CRAMP. THIS HAS BEEN CATHARTIC, BUT WE'RE DONE, BRAT.
NO!
WHAT THE--?
YOU SAVED ME! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
I AM IF YOU ARE.
NEITHER OF YOU WILL BE!

CREAM! NOW!
NyARGH!
NO! GET OFF ME!
I GOT IT!

NO...
YOU. HURT. CREAM.
GET OFF ME! DON'T YOU DARE!

I'M SORRY, GEMERL...
DO NOT BE. I REQUIRED YOUR ASSISTANCE AFTER ALL. THANK YOU.
YES, BUT...
...I GOT SICK.
I... DON'T WANT TO MAKE THE OTHERS SICK. S-SO YOU HAVE TO GO BACK ON YOUR OWN.
I-I'LL... I'LL...
I'LL BE BRAVE. I'LL JUST HIDE MY EYES. LIKE IT'S A SCARY MOVIE.

BWOOH
GEMERL...?
I WILL STAY WITH YOU UNTIL... YOU ARE WELL.

ANGEL ISLAND.
YO, EGGMAN. YOU SEE WHAT I SEE?
BLAST IT ALL! WE'RE OUT OF TIME!
ZAVOK'S FOUND US!

ART BY NATHALIE FOURDRAINE

ART BY ABBY BULMER

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG #28

ORCHARDVILLE.
STRUGGLE.
WRIGGLE.
WRITHE AND CRY.
YOU CAN'T ESCAPE.
YOU'LL SOON BE MINE.

YOU'RE SILVER, RIGHT? I SPEND A LOT OF TIME ONLINE, BROWSING THE EGGNET.
YOU'RE REALLY FROM THE FUTURE, *HUH?* HOW FAR AHEAD?

NNGH! I DUNNO-- A COUPLE OF HUNDRED YEARS OR SO?
BLAM

AND YOU SAID OUR DEVASTATION IS *STILL* FELT *THAT* FAR IN THE FUTURE?
THE BLEAKNESS! THE MISERY OF IT ALL! I CAN HARDLY STAND IT!

YOU'RE SERIOUSLY MESSED UP! HOW CAN YOU *BE* THIS WAY?!

TCH. HOW CAN *YOU* BE SO DISGUSTINGLY HEROIC AND SELFLESS?

BECAUSE *I* HAVE *FAITH* IN OTHERS. I BELIEVE THINGS WILL GET BETTER.
AND BECAUSE I'VE GOT A GUARDIAN ANGEL WATCHING OVER ME!

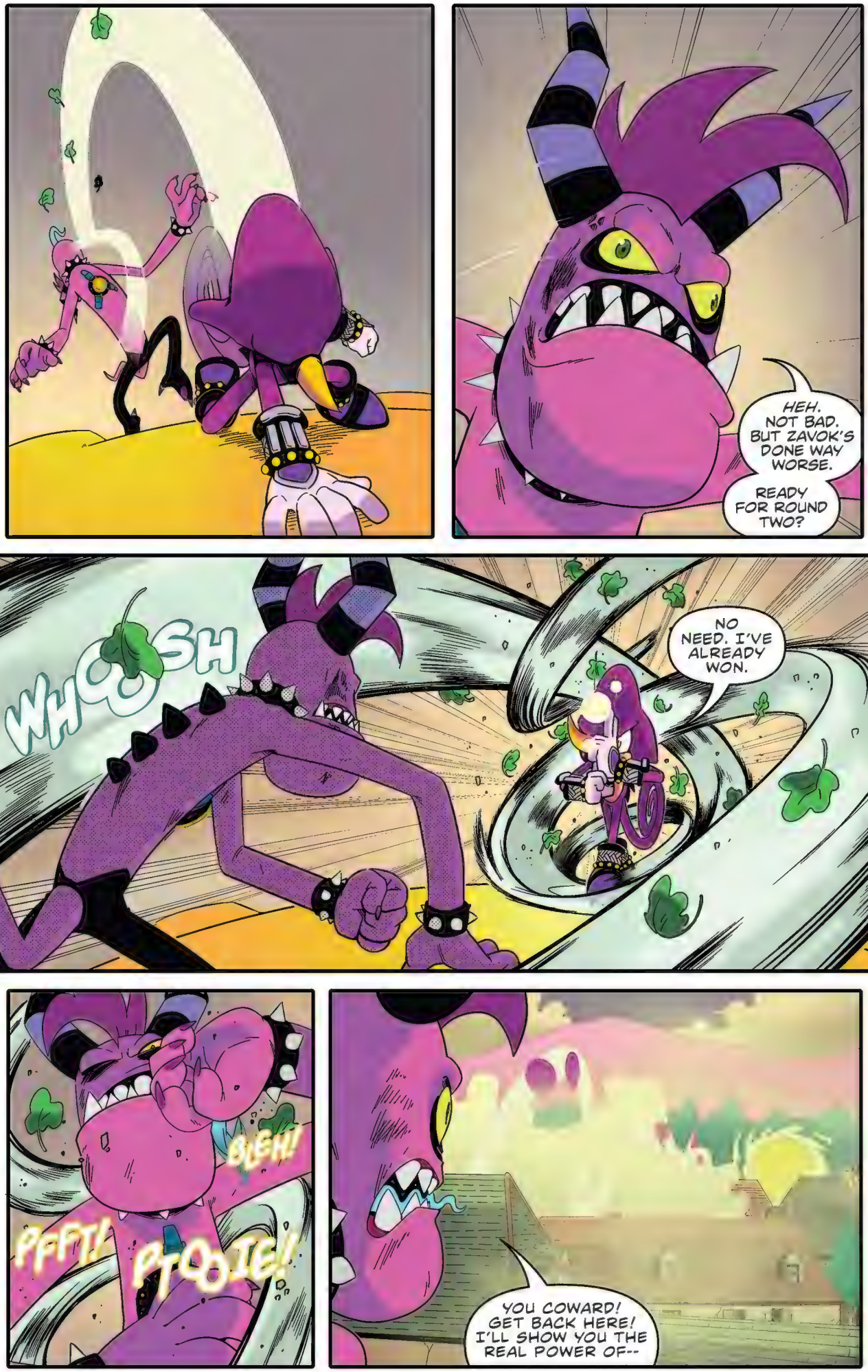
SKYOW
SKYOW
PLINK

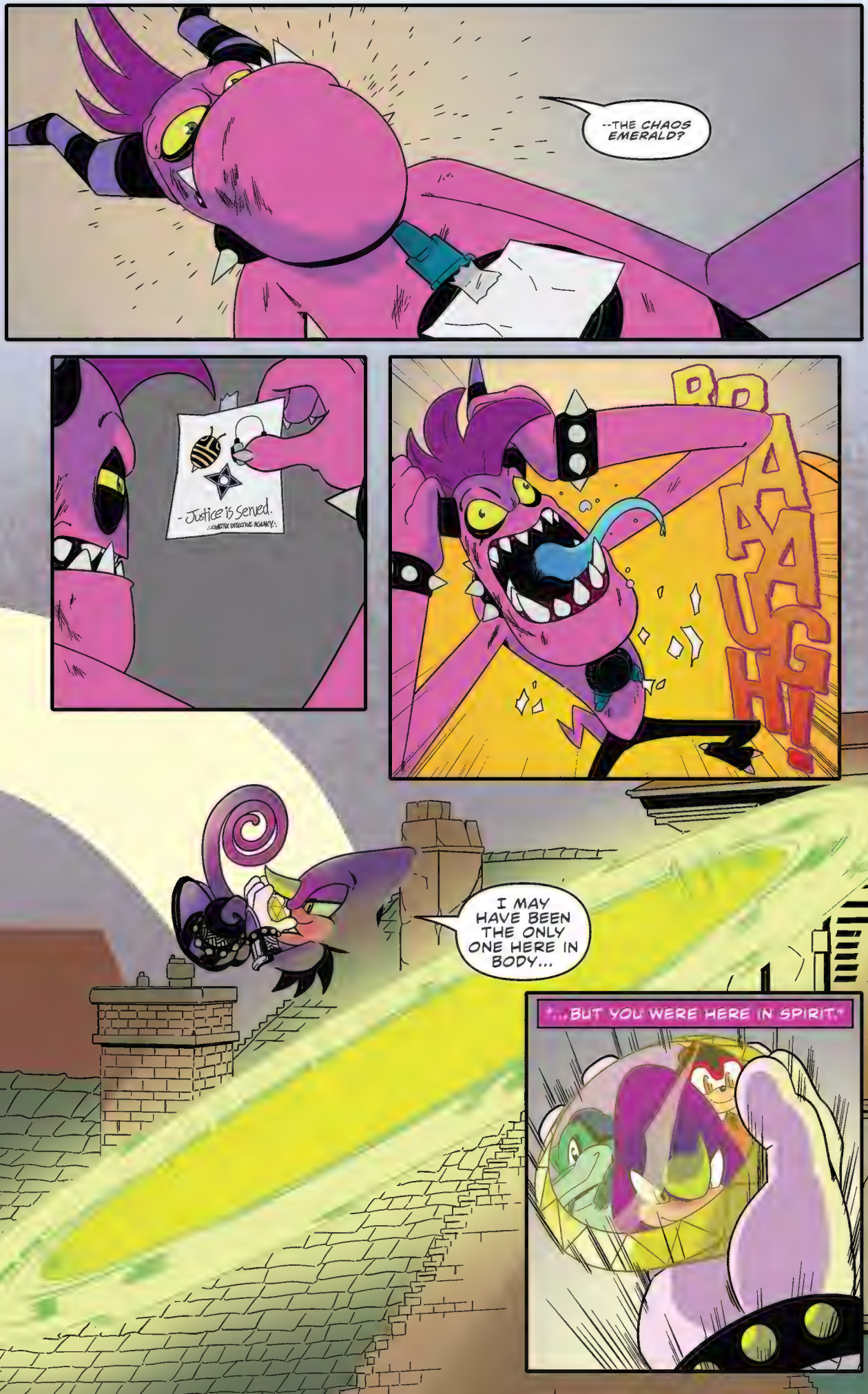
NOO!
Y-YOU CAN'T LEAVE ME LIKE THIS! Y-YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE HEROES!
I'M TRAPPED! POWERLESS! THIS IS INHUMANE! IT'S... IT'S...!
...PERFECT!

RIVERSIDE.
HA HA HA!
LOOK AT HIM RUN!
BOX HIM IN! HA HA HA!
THAT'S NOT FAIR!

BRING HIM DOWN!
RRRUMBLE
HEH HEH HEH!
WHAT?!
AWWW--YOU'RE NOT TRYING THAT INVISIBILITY TRICK AGAIN, ARE YOU?! LAME!
GET OUT HERE AND FIGHT ME LIKE A MAN!

NYYAH!
PAP
PAP
PAP
CRACK


HEH. NOT BAD. BUT ZAVOK'S DONE WAY WORSE.
READY FOR ROUND TWO?
WHOOSH
NO NEED. I'VE ALREADY WON.
BLEH!
PFFT!
PTOOIE!
YOU COWARD! GET BACK HERE! I'LL SHOW YOU THE REAL POWER OF--

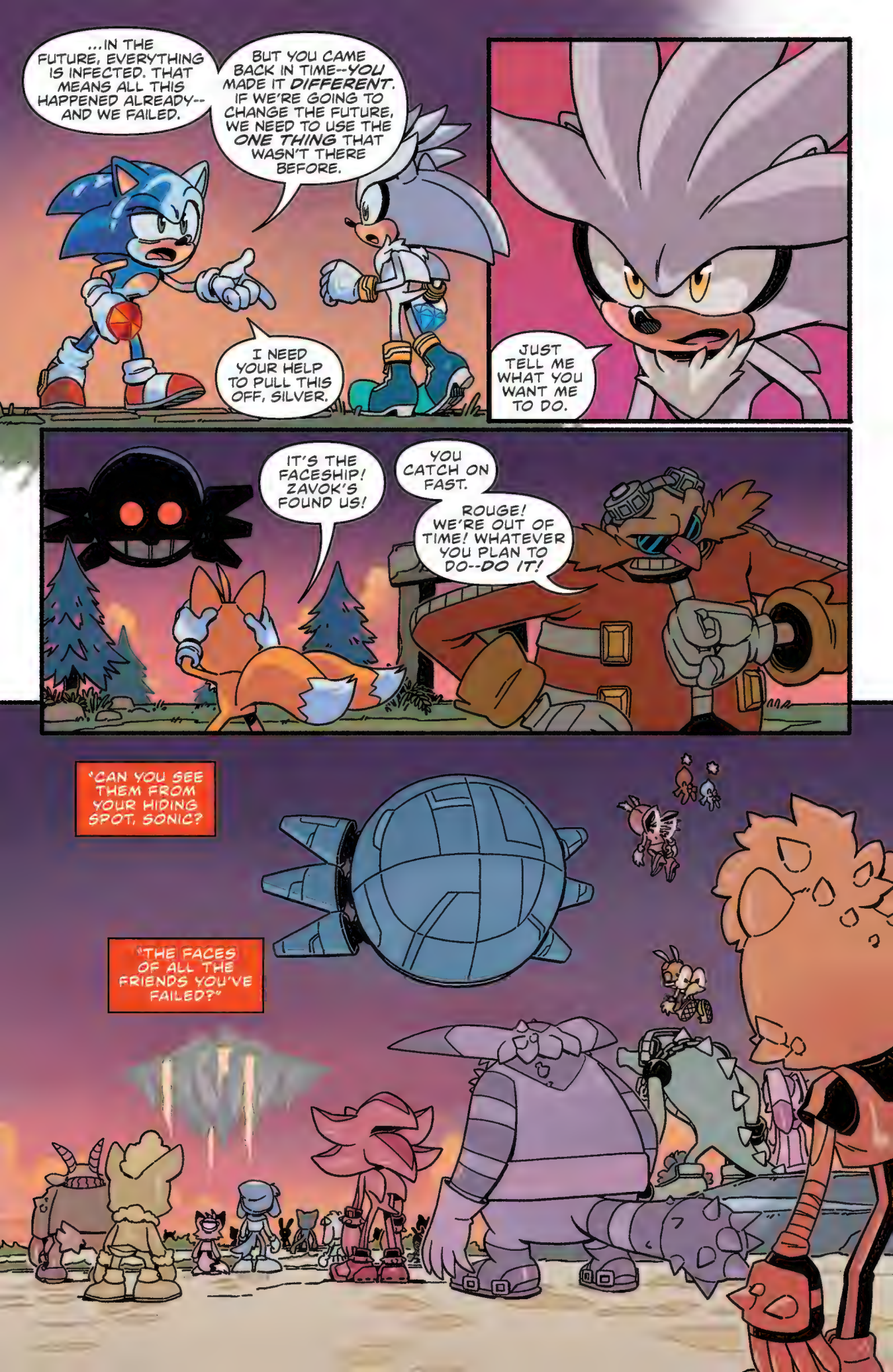

--THE CHAOS EMERALD?
- Justice is Served.
.:CHAOTIX DETECTIVE AGENCY:.
AAAUGH!
I MAY HAVE BEEN THE ONLY ONE HERE IN BODY...
...BUT YOU WERE HERE IN SPIRIT.

WINTERBURG.
LET!
THEM!
GO!
BRASH, YOUNG FOOL. ONLY NOW DO YOU BEGIN TO UNDERSTAND THE CONSEQUENCES OF THREATENING YOUR ELDERS.
JET, BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE...
...I TOLD YOU A FRONTAL ASSAULT WAS A BAD IDEA!
BOSS! WHAT'RE WE GONNA DO?! I CAN'T PUNCH THESE GUYS, AND THAT'S ALL I KNOW HOW TO DO!
WAVE... STORM...
HM-HM-HM! YOU'RE A POOR LEADER, CHILD.
YOU DON'T SACRIFICE YOUR OWN UNLESS IT WILL GAIN YOU THE ADVANTAGE.
NOW ALL I NEED TO DO IS UTTER A SINGLE COMMAND, AND YOU'VE LOST EVERYTHING.
HUMOR AN OLD MAN AND BEG FOR MERCY? IT'S BEEN SO LONG SINCE I'VE CRUSHED THE ENEMY UNDER MY OWN HEEL.
WE'RE THE BABYLON ROGUES.
WE DON'T BEG. WE DON'T GIVE UP.

AND WE DON'T LOSE!
BWOOSH
POW
PLINK
THAT WASN'T TACTICAL! THERE WAS NO SKILL! YOU BRATS GOT LUCKY! LUCKY I TELL YOU!

HERE! TAKE THE EMERALD AND GO!
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? LET'S JUST GET OUT OF HERE!
MY EXTREME GEAR GOT LOST TO THE ZOMBOTS! STORM'S ALMOST SMASHED HIS TO PIECES!
YOU HAVE THE ONLY WORKING AIRBOARD! SO GO!
WHAT ARE YOU--?!
DIDN'T YOU HEAR ME TELL THE GEEZER? THE BABYLON ROGUES DON'T LOSE. THAT MEANS ALL OF US.
SONIC WILL GET THE EMERALD AND DO HIS HERO-THING. UNTIL THEN, LET'S SHOW THESE ZOMBOTS A REAL CHALLENGE!

ANGEL ISLAND.
HMPH. LOOKS LIKE THE BABYLON ROGUES DIDN'T MAKE IT.
CREAM? WHERE IS CREAM?! WHERE...
...OH NO.
GEMERL'S WITH HER. SHE... SHE'LL BE ALRIGHT. BECAUSE WE'RE GOING TO *MAKE* THINGS RIGHT.
TWO MORE EMERALDS AND YOU CAN BECOME SUPER SONIC AND SAVE US ALL.
I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT THAT. LISTEN...


...IN THE FUTURE, EVERYTHING IS INFECTED. THAT MEANS ALL THIS HAPPENED ALREADY--AND WE FAILED.
BUT YOU CAME BACK IN TIME--*YOU* MADE IT *DIFFERENT*. IF WE'RE GOING TO CHANGE THE FUTURE, WE NEED TO USE THE *ONE THING* THAT WASN'T THERE BEFORE.
I NEED YOUR HELP TO PULL THIS OFF, SILVER.
JUST TELL ME WHAT YOU WANT ME TO DO.
IT'S THE FACESHIP! ZAVOK'S FOUND US!
YOU CATCH ON FAST.
ROUGE! WE'RE OUT OF TIME! WHATEVER YOU PLAN TO DO--*DO IT!*
"CAN YOU SEE THEM FROM YOUR HIDING SPOT, SONIC?
"THE FACES OF ALL THE FRIENDS YOU'VE FAILED?"

ANGEL ISLAND.
IT LOOKS SMALLER THAN LOST HEX, BUT NO LESS BEAUTIFUL.
I CANNOT WAIT TO BATHE IT IN METAL VIRUS.
WHAT IN BLAZES...?
GOODNESS! DOES THIS ONE EMERALD POWER THE *WHOLE* SHIP?
I *HAD* WANTED TO DO THIS MORE ELEGANTLY, BUT I SUPPOSE BRUTE FORCE WORKS FOR A BRUTE LIKE YOU.
TUCK AND ROLL, BOYS!
I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS WAS OUR BEST OPTION!
DESPERATE TIMES CALL FOR DESPERATE DESPERATENESS!

NO!
ALAS! THERE GOES MY BEST EFFORT TO DATE.
I'M JUST GLAD THE ZOMBOTS CAN SURVIVE THAT KIND OF DAMAGE. SHEESH.

YOU DID KNOW THE ZOMBOTS COULD SURVIVE THE FACESHIP CRASHING ON THEM, RIGHT?
OF COURSE! I DO MY RESEARCH.
YOU'RE WELCOME BY THE WAY.
WHAT ABOUT THE ONE ZAVOK HAD?
ONCE THE FIRES ARE OUT, WE'LL DIG IT OUT OF WHATEVER'S LEFT DOWN THERE.
HE'S NOT GOING ANYWHERE.
ACTUALLY HE'S COMING RIGHT FOR US!

SSSSFFFFF
FWOOM
SHA-
KOOM
DID HE JUST SPIT ON MY ISLAND?!
TAILS! ROUGE! I NEED AIR SUPPORT!
SILVER! BRING THE EMERALDS! WE'VE GOTTA--!

WE'VE... GOTTA...

ART BY NATHALIE FOURDRAINE

ART BY JACK LAWRENCE COLORS BY LEONARDO ITO

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG #29

ANGEL ISLAND.
WHY DO YOU ALWAYS BRING TROUBLE TO MY ISLAND?
I KNOW THIS LOOKS BAD, KNUX...
"...ZAVOK IS CHARGED UP ON CHAOS EMERALD ENERGY...
"...HE'S BLASTING ANGEL ISLAND WITH FIREBALLS...
"...AND IT LOOKS LIKE HE'S USING HIS SOUPED-UP ELECTRO-MAGNETIC POWERS TO THROW ZOMBOTS UP HERE."
"THERE'S LITERALLY NOWHERE LEFT TO RUN!"
YEAH, IT SEEMS BLEAK. BUT I'VE GOT A PLAN.
TRUST ME.
YOU BETTER...

...OR I'M SO GOING TO HAUNT YOU!
KNUCKLES! DON'T--!
WE'VE GOT TO KEEP THEM AWAY FROM THE MASTER EMERALD AND REFUGEES!
SO SAVE THE DAY ALREADY!
YOU HEARD THE MAN! SILVER?
RIGHT BEHIND YOU!
METAL! I NEED YOU TOO!
IT'S THE ONLY WAY TO SAVE ME!
ACTIVATE YOUR DEFENSIVE MEASURES AND DO AS HE SAYS!

THIS IS YOUR LAST SHOW OF RESISTANCE? THIS IS ALL YOU CAN MUSTER?
YOU MAY HAVE DESTROYED MY MEANS OF CREATING MORE METAL VIRUS...
...BUT I STILL COMMAND THE ZOMBOTS! I WILL HAVE THEM INFECT EVERY INCH OF THE GLOBE!
I WILL SEE YOUR PRECIOUS WORLD GROW SICK AND PERISH!
HEAD STRAIGHT FOR THE CHAOS EMERALD ON HIS CHEST!

NO!
WHOO-HA-HA! NICE TRY!
BOY, AM I GLAD TAILS AND I DIDN'T DEACTIVATE YOU WHEN WE HAD THE CHANCE.*
*STH #12.
OH, SHOOT-- GOTTA MOVE!

THANKS!
BUT DON'T RISK DROPPING THE GEMS!
JUST WORRY ABOUT THE LAST CHAOS EMERALD!
THERE IT IS! GET ME IN CLOSE SO I CAN--!
WHOOSH

SMASH
OH, HEY, IT'S SONIC!
THAT INFECTION DOESN'T LOOK GOOD.
I SUGGEST YOU START RUNNING.
YEAH... THAT'S NOT REALLY WORKING MUCH ANYMORE...
YOU MISUNDER-STAND. I MEAN RUN FROM THEM!
IF I CAN GET UP ENOUGH SPEED, I CAN JUST RUN UP TO THE EMERALD...
...HANG ON, GUYS! JUST A LITTLE BIT MORE!

I CAN'T SHAKE 'EM!
AHHH! GET BACK!

PIKO
AUGH!
ON THE CONTRARY-- YOU SLOWED HIM DOWN FOR ME!
GET TO THEIR SHUTTLE! GET OUT OF HERE AND-- !
THAT DID NOTHING...
NO! NOT LIKE THIS!

MUST... PROTECT... ISLAND...
SONIC... PLEASE...

BOOM
METAL... UP...
BWOSH
ACCEPT YOUR FATE, SONIC! YOU HAVE LOST...

...AND ALL MACHINES ARE MINE TO CONTROL!
SILVER! NOW!

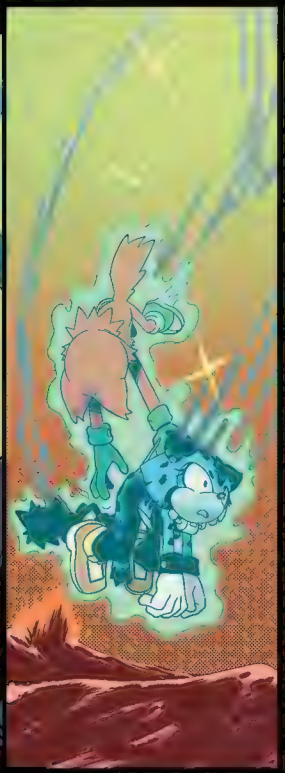
SLAM
BWOOSH
ALL RIGHT. READY TO SAVE THE WORLD?
ONE SEC. LET ME TAKE CARE OF HIM FIRST.
WITH THE LAST OF MY STRENGTH, I WILL CRUSH YOU--!

POW
POW
POW
POW
POW
POW

THAT SEEMED A LITTLE ANTI-CLIMACTIC.
WE DON'T HAVE TIME TO BE FANCY.

ESPECIALLY SINCE THE WARP TOPAZ DOESN'T LOOK LIKE IT'S HANDLING ALL THIS POWER TOO WELL.

I'LL DRIVE AND HANDLE THE WARP PORTAL. YOU HANDLE THE REST WITH YOUR PSYCHOKINESIS.
GOT IT!



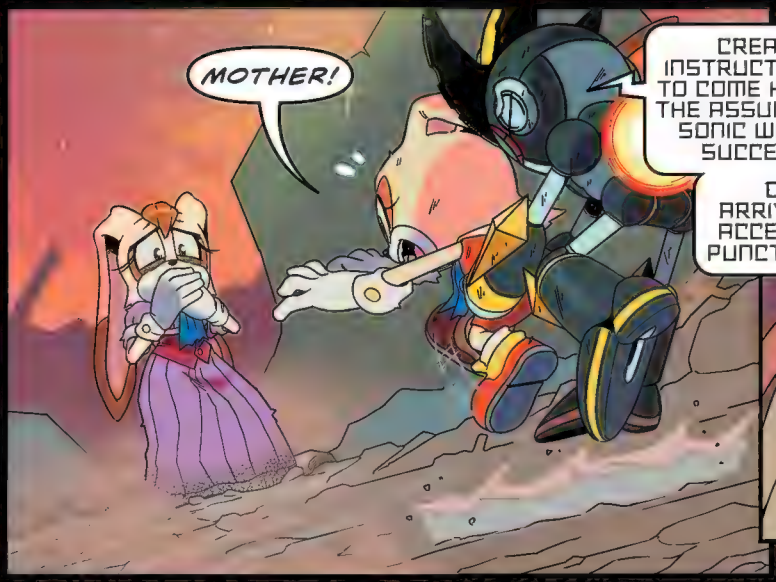
HA HA HA! THEY DID IT! THEY DID IT!
AMY?
HOORAY!
WHUZZUH... WHY AM I BACK ON ANGEL ISLAND...?
OH, HEY! MISS ME MUCH?
TEAM CHAOTIX! WE'RE DETECTIVES YOU WANT ON YOUR SIDE!
RIBBT

SHADOW?
...KNUCKLES.

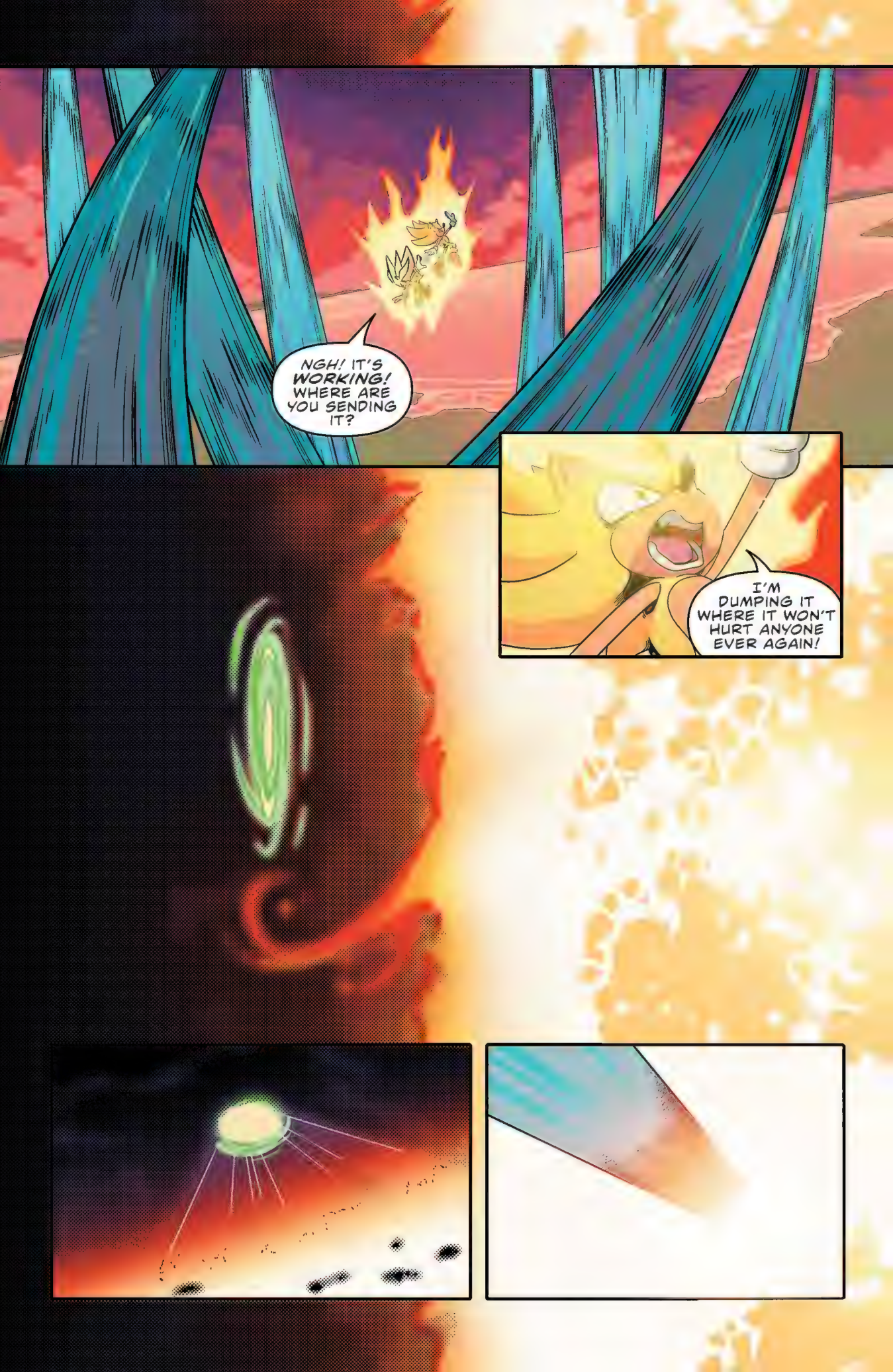
ROUGE?!
THE WORLD WAS ABOUT TO END! I WANTED TO SPEND MY LAST MOMENTS WITH THE ONE I LOVE!

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, MISS?
I WILL BE. THANK YOU, KIND SIR.

MOTHER!

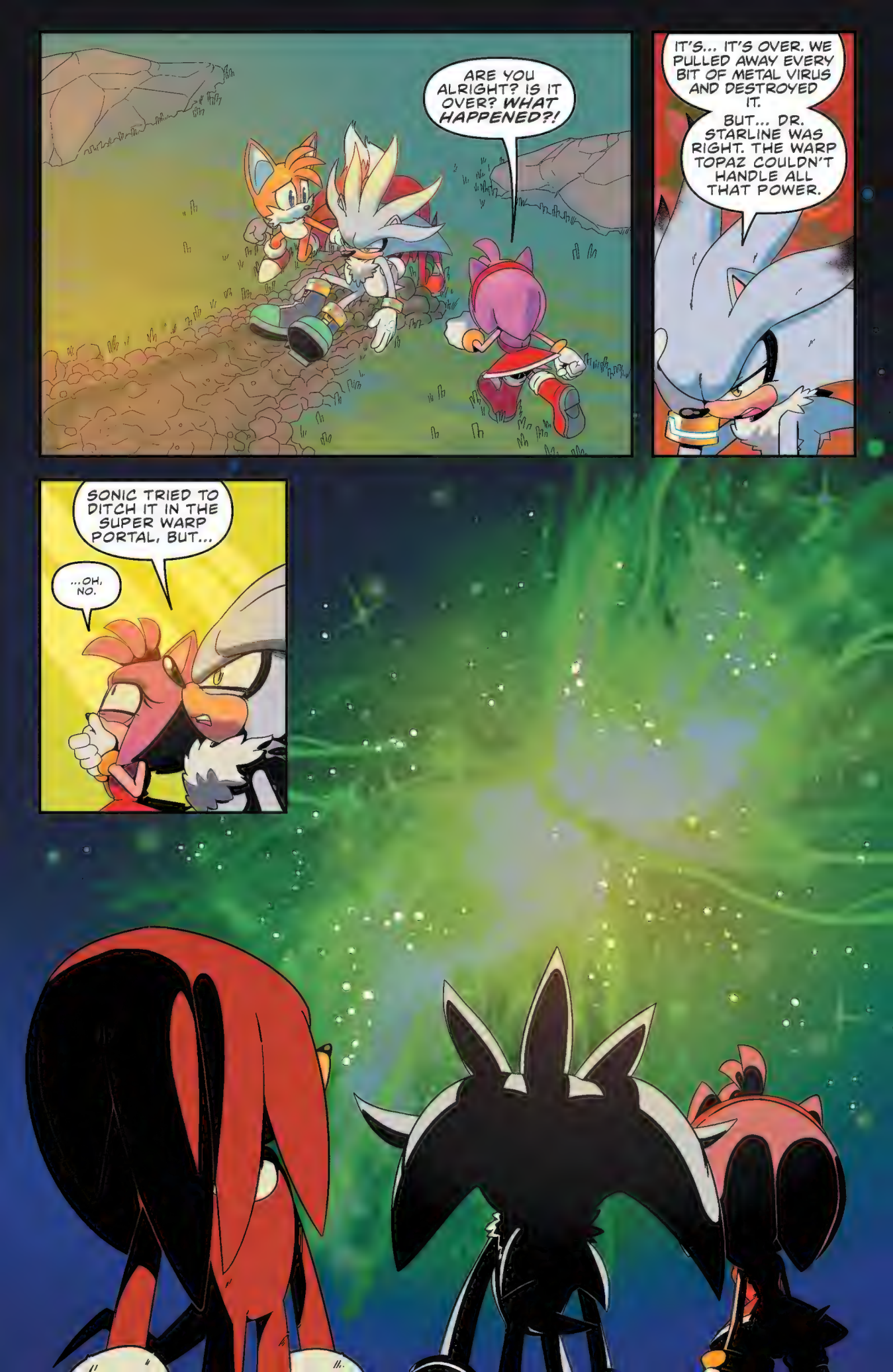

MOTHER!
CREAM INSTRUCTED ME TO COME HERE IN THE ASSUMPTION SONIC WOULD SUCCEED.
DID I ARRIVE WITH ACCEPTABLE PUNCTUALITY?

...
I WILL WAIT.


NGH! IT'S WORKING! WHERE ARE YOU SENDING IT?
I'M DUMPING IT WHERE IT WON'T HURT ANYONE EVER AGAIN!

THE WARP TOPAZ ISN'T GOING TO LAST MUCH LONGER!
HANG ON--WE'RE KICKING IT INTO SUPER SONIC SPEED!

H-H-HOW W-W-WE D-D-DOIN', S-S-SILVER?!
I-I-I'M N-N-NOT D-D-DETECTING A-A-ANY M-M-MORE! W-W-WE'RE D-D-DONE!
T-T-TIME T-T-TO G-G-GET R-R-RID OF-F-F TH-TH-THIS--!
SHA-KOOM
SILVER!
WHAM


ARE YOU ALRIGHT? IS IT OVER? WHAT HAPPENED?!
IT'S... IT'S OVER. WE PULLED AWAY EVERY BIT OF METAL VIRUS AND DESTROYED IT.
BUT... DR. STARLINE WAS RIGHT. THE WARP TOPAZ COULDN'T HANDLE ALL THAT POWER.
SONIC TRIED TO DITCH IT IN THE SUPER WARP PORTAL, BUT...
...OH, NO.

ART BY NATHALIE FOURDRAINE

ART BY ADAM BRYCE THOMAS

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG #30

SONIC! WE DID IT! THE METAL VIRUS IS GONE FROM THE WORLD!
G-G-GREAT! N-N-NOW T-T-TO D-D-DITCH TH-TH-THE W-W-WARP T-T-TOPAZ...!
SHA-WOOM
SILVER!
ARE YOU ALRIGHT? IS IT OVER? WHAT HAPPENED?!
IT'S... IT'S OVER. WE PULLED AWAY EVERY BIT OF METAL VIRUS AND DESTROYED IT.

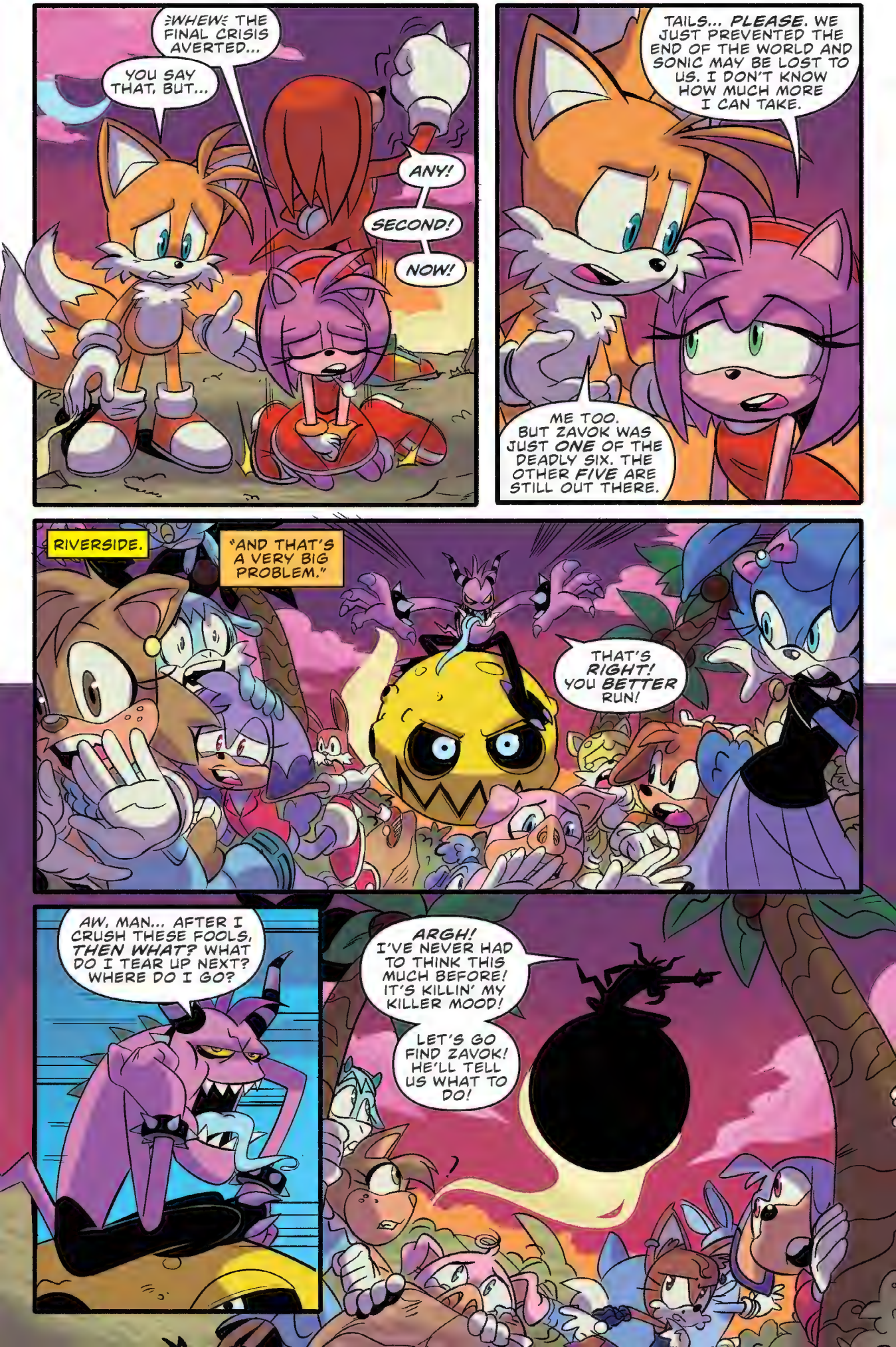
BUT... DR. STARLINE WAS RIGHT. THE WARP TOPAZ COULDN'T HANDLE ALL THAT POWER.
SONIC TRIED TO DITCH IT IN THE SUPER WARP PORTAL, BUT...
...OH, NO.
TCH! HE'S JUST BEING DRAMATIC. HE'LL COME FLOATING DOWN, ALL GOLDEN AND SMUG, ANY MINUTE NOW.
AAAANY MINUTE NOW.
IS THERE A WAY WE COULD... I DON'T KNOW, SEARCH FOR HIM?
HE WAS AT THE CENTER OF CHAOS EMERALD-FUELED WARP TOPAZ DISTORTIONS. I WOULDN'T KNOW WHERE TO BEGIN.
"DARN IT, SONIC! YOU'RE MAKING ME LOOK BAD! KNOCK IT OFF AND COME BACK!"
"OH, BOO-HOO! OUR HERO MADE THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE!"
PLEASE. IT'S LIKE I'M THE ONLY ONE WHO REALLY KNOWS THAT INSUFFERABLE BLUE NUISANCE.
STILL, WHILE THEY'RE ALL BUSY WRINGING THEIR HANDS OVER SONIC, I'LL MAKE MY TACTICAL RETREAT.
GOOD THING I TOOK SPECIAL CARE TO REPURPOSE ONLY NON-ESSENTIAL PARTS OF THE SHUTTLE FOR THAT PORTAL DEVICE!

MOTHER... I DIDN'T SEE MR. SONIC RETURN TO ANGEL ISLAND.
WELL... IT WAS A VERY BRIGHT FLASH. PERHAPS WE JUST MISSED HIM?
GEMERL, I KNOW YOU'VE HAD A VERY BUSY DAY, BUT WOULD YOU MIND LOOKING FOR... GEMERL? WHAT'S WRONG?
OH, NO! MOTHER-- LOOK OUT! IT'S--!
ME.
STOP IT! ALL YOUR MEAN FRIENDS WERE BEATEN! THE BAD TIMES ARE OVER! JUST GO HOME!
NO.

I WILL NOT SUFFER HUMILIATION FROM SONIC AGAIN! I WILL NEVER ACCEPT DEFEAT!
I HAVE LOST THE METAL VIRUS AND THE ZOMBOT HORDE.
I HAVE LOST THE POWER OF THE CHAOS EMERALD...
...SO I WILL TEAR THIS WORLD ASUNDER WITH MY BARE HANDS!
NO! MR. SONIC WILL COME BACK AND STOP YOU!
THEN YOU WON'T BE HERE TO WELCOME HIS RETURN! ANY LAST WORDS, WHELP?
YES, SIR.
CHEESE! GET 'IM!
POW!

YOU DARE?!
SOK
YEAH, WE DO!
ALRIGHT, BOYS...
...LET'S TAKE HIM DOWN!
RAAUGH

I.
WILL.
NOT.
FALL!
THUD
THEN YOU'LL BE CRUSHED!
I... WILL... HAVE... MY... REVENGE... ON... YOU... ALL...


WHEW! THE FINAL CRISIS AVERTED...
YOU SAY THAT, BUT...
ANY!
SECOND!
NOW!
TAILS... PLEASE. WE JUST PREVENTED THE END OF THE WORLD AND SONIC MAY BE LOST TO US. I DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH MORE I CAN TAKE.
ME TOO. BUT ZAVOK WAS JUST ONE OF THE DEADLY SIX. THE OTHER FIVE ARE STILL OUT THERE.
RIVERSIDE.
"AND THAT'S A VERY BIG PROBLEM."
THAT'S RIGHT! YOU BETTER RUN!
AW, MAN... AFTER I CRUSH THESE FOOLS, THEN WHAT? WHAT DO I TEAR UP NEXT? WHERE DO I GO?
ARGH! I'VE NEVER HAD TO THINK THIS MUCH BEFORE! IT'S KILLIN' MY KILLER MOOD!
LET'S GO FIND ZAVOK! HE'LL TELL US WHAT TO DO!

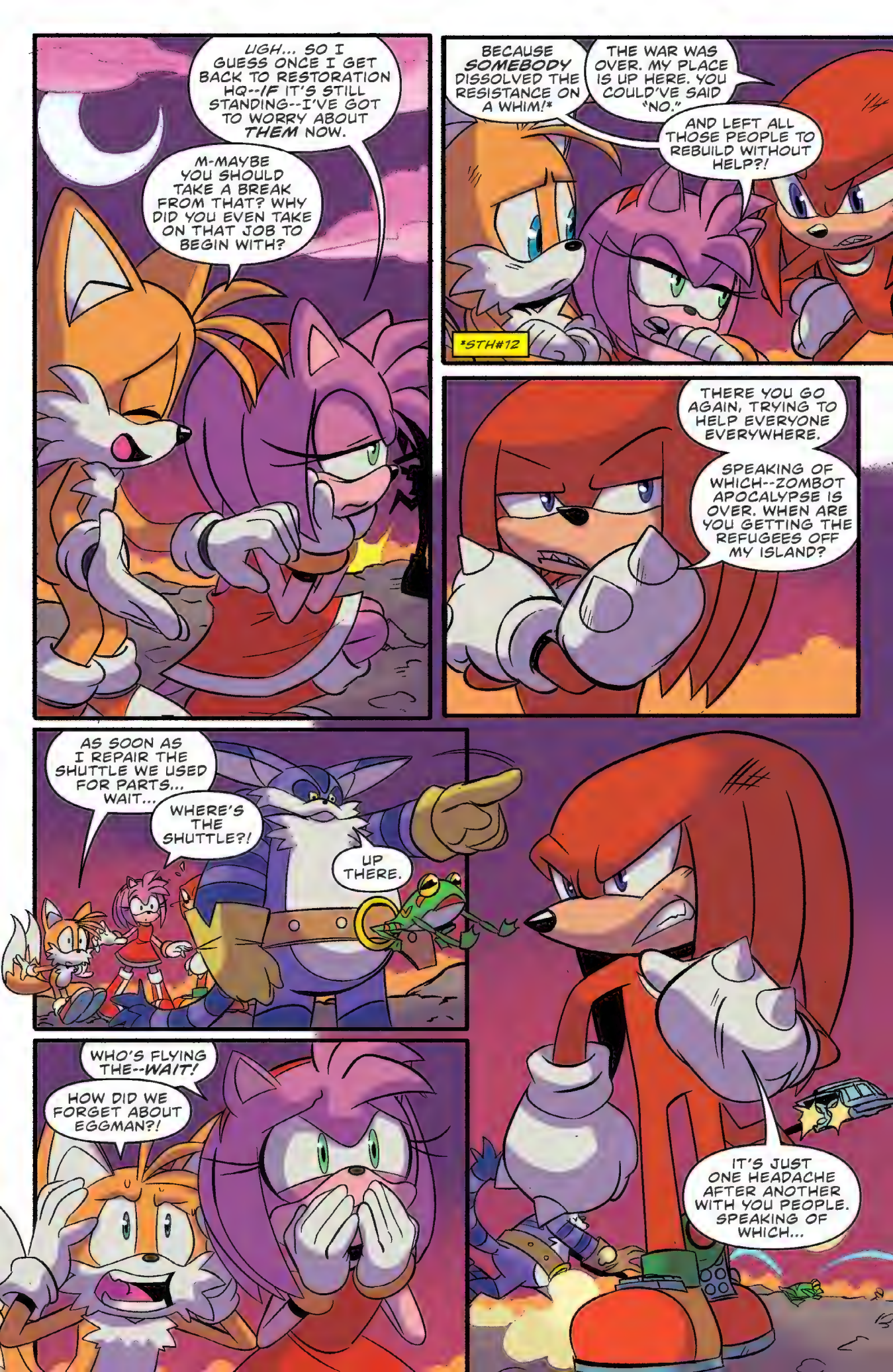
SUNSET CITY.
I SAID "BACK OFF!"
IT'S BAD ENOUGH YOU INGRATES WON'T DO WHAT I SAY! NOW YOU'RE MAKING ME DO MY OWN FIGHTING?!
WELL IF ZAVOK'S PLAN FAILED, THEN I'M OUT...
...BUT I WON'T FORGET THIS.
YOU'RE ALL GOING TO SUFFER FOR THIS INDIGNITY.
ORCHARDVILLE.
ANY SIGN OF THE WEIRDO WHO WAS CONTROLLING US?
NO. AND GLEN HASN'T COME BACK.
OH, MAN... STICK CLOSE TO ME, OKAY?
HEE-HEE! YOUR FRIEND WON'T BE MOVING ANY TIME SOON!
I REALLY SHOULDN'T BE ENJOYING MYSELF LIKE THIS BUT...
...DESPERATE AND ALL ALONE? SURROUNDED BY FEAR AND HATRED? SLINKING BETWEEN THE SHADOWS?
THIS IS ALMOST AS GOOD AS TERRORIZING THE WORLD WITH ZOMBOTS!

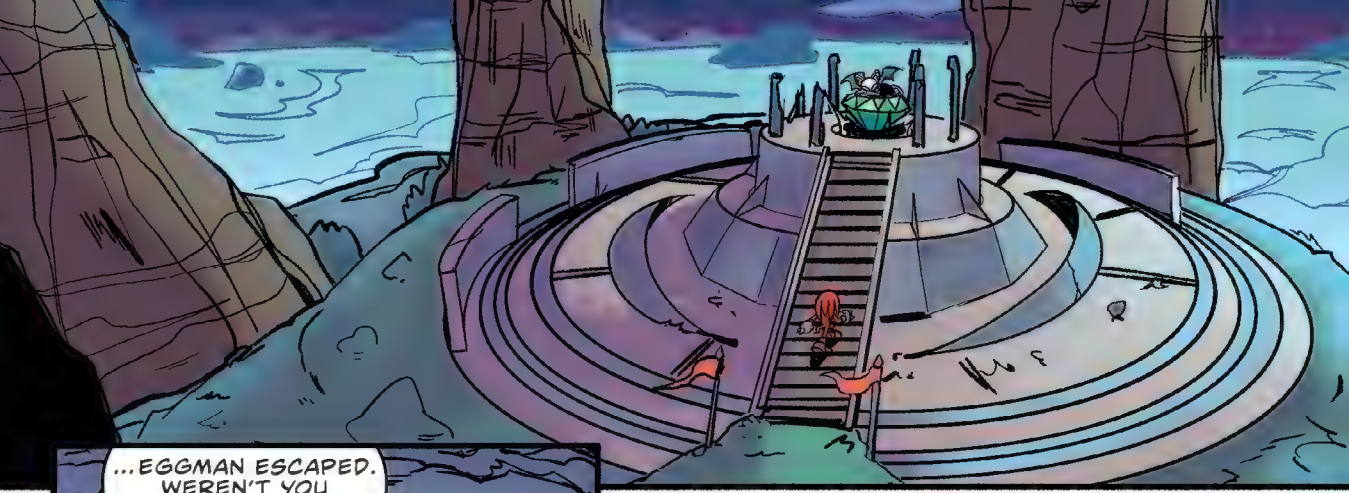
VISTA VIEW.
BRING MORE STUFF TO WEIGH THIS DOWN! HURRY! WE'VE GOT TO KEEP IT TRAPPED!
NNNNGH...
AWW... I LOOK LIKE A WAFFLE...
HEY, WAIT!
BRING ME WAFFLES!
WINTERBURG.
BUFFOONS. THE INSTANT THEY THINK THE THREAT IS OVER, THEY START CELEBRATING.
SUCH JUBILATION WILL BE THEIR DOWNFALL. BUT FIRST--I MUST FIND ZAVOK AND DEVISE OUR COUNTER-OFFENSIVE.
AND WHILE IT PAINS ME TO ADMIT IT...

"...THE BABYLON ROGUES HAVE EARNED THEIR VICTORY."
WE'RE ALIVE! WE'RE OKAY! WE'RE NOT ZOMBOTS!
YEAH-YEAH-YEAH! PUT ME DOWN, YA BIG PALOOKA!
JET? ARE YOU OKAY?
YOU'RE WASTING A WORRY. I'M FINE.
THAT WAS CLOSE. TOO CLOSE. WHERE'S THAT SHRIVELED OLD MAN? I WANT TO TURN THAT PRUNE INTO JUICE!

IF HE KNOWS WHAT'S GOOD FOR HIM, HE'S ALREADY ON THE RUN.
YEAH. BUT YOU KNOW WHO DIDN'T RUN? YOU. YOU STUCK WITH US TO THE BITTER END. THAT WAS INCREDIBLY BRAVE AND NOBLE OF YOU, JET.
R-REALLY...?

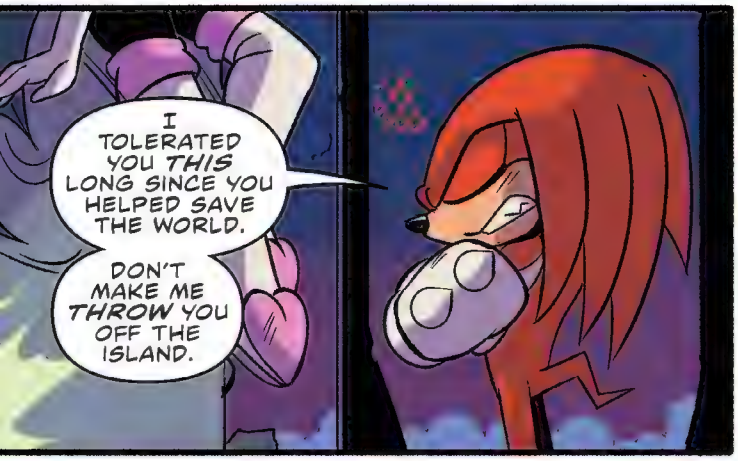
I MEAN--YEAH, DUH, OF COURSE I STUCK AROUND! I'M THE LEGENDARY WIND MASTER! THE BRAVEST, NOBLEST, BESTEST LEADER OF ALL TIME!
AAAAND THE MOMENT IS RUINED.
YOU SURE ARE, BOSS! YOU SURE ARE!


UGH... SO I GUESS ONCE I GET BACK TO RESTORATION HQ--IF IT'S STILL STANDING--I'VE GOT TO WORRY ABOUT THEM NOW.
M-MAYBE YOU SHOULD TAKE A BREAK FROM THAT? WHY DID YOU EVEN TAKE ON THAT JOB TO BEGIN WITH?
BECAUSE SOMEBODY DISSOLVED THE RESISTANCE ON A WHIM!*
THE WAR WAS OVER. MY PLACE IS UP HERE. YOU COULD'VE SAID "NO."
AND LEFT ALL THOSE PEOPLE TO REBUILD WITHOUT HELP?!
*STH#12
THERE YOU GO AGAIN, TRYING TO HELP EVERYONE EVERYWHERE.
SPEAKING OF WHICH--ZOMBOT APOCALYPSE IS OVER. WHEN ARE YOU GETTING THE REFUGEES OFF MY ISLAND?
AS SOON AS I REPAIR THE SHUTTLE WE USED FOR PARTS... WAIT...
WHERE'S THE SHUTTLE?!
UP THERE.
WHO'S FLYING THE--WAIT!
HOW DID WE FORGET ABOUT EGGMAN?!
IT'S JUST ONE HEADACHE AFTER ANOTHER WITH YOU PEOPLE. SPEAKING OF WHICH...



...EGGMAN ESCAPED. WEREN'T YOU SUPPOSED TO BE WATCHING HIM?
YOU'RE THE GUARDIAN OF THIS PLACE. SHOULDN'T *YOU*?
NOT MY PROBLEM ANYMORE. YOUR TIME'S UP. SCRAM.

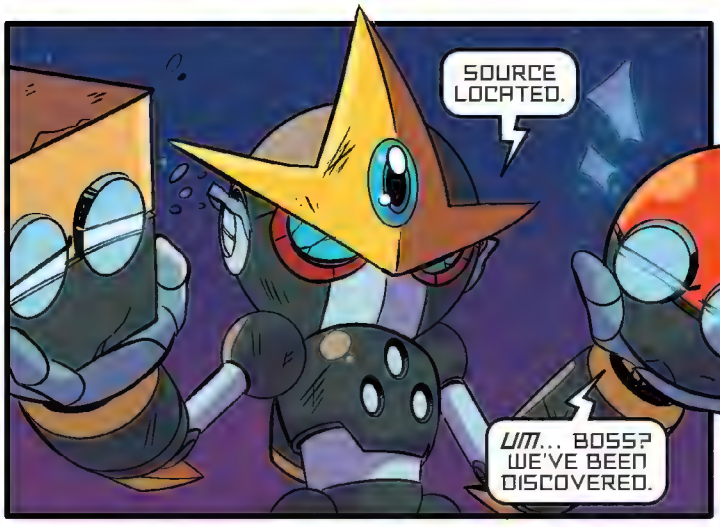
AWW... JUST FIVE MORE MINUTES?


I TOLERATED YOU *THIS* LONG SINCE YOU HELPED SAVE THE WORLD.
DON'T MAKE ME *THROW* YOU OFF THE ISLAND.

YOU'RE SO STUBBORN. UNTIL NEXT TIME, HANDSOME.

ANY MINUTE NOW.

EGGNET SIGNAL DETECTED. SEARCHING FOR SOURCE.


SOURCE LOCATED.
UM... BOSS? WE'VE BEEN DISCOVERED.

RETRIEVAL IS ON THE WAY!

ALERT! ALERRR--
SHUNK

GEMERL!
WHERE WAS HE HIDING?!

SKOW
BWOOOH
I'LL GET HIM! LEMME AT HIM!
WE ARE NOT DOING THAT AGAIN! SILVER! GRAB HIM!
I'VE GOT MY HANDS FULL! SHADOW! CAN YOU--!
--OH.

GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN AND IN GOOD HEALTH, BOSS.
NO NEED TO SUCK UP TO ME, CUBOT. CRASHING THE FACESHIP WAS A NECESSARY EVIL.

AH, BUT WE ALREADY FOUND YOU A CONSOLATION PRIZE. OMEGA'S HEAD!
DESTROY ALL EGGMAN ROBOTS! RED DRONE! USE ME TO BLUDGEON THE YELLOW DRONE, THEN YOURSELF!
WHY DO I HAVE TO HOLD HIM?!

OOOH! THE WAYWARD FINAL MODEL IN MY E-100 LINE! WHAT A DELIGHTFUL SURPRISE! I KNOW JUST HOW TO USE YOU TO CRUSH SONIC'S LITTLE FRIENDS!
NO REST FOR THE WICKED, EH, BOSS?

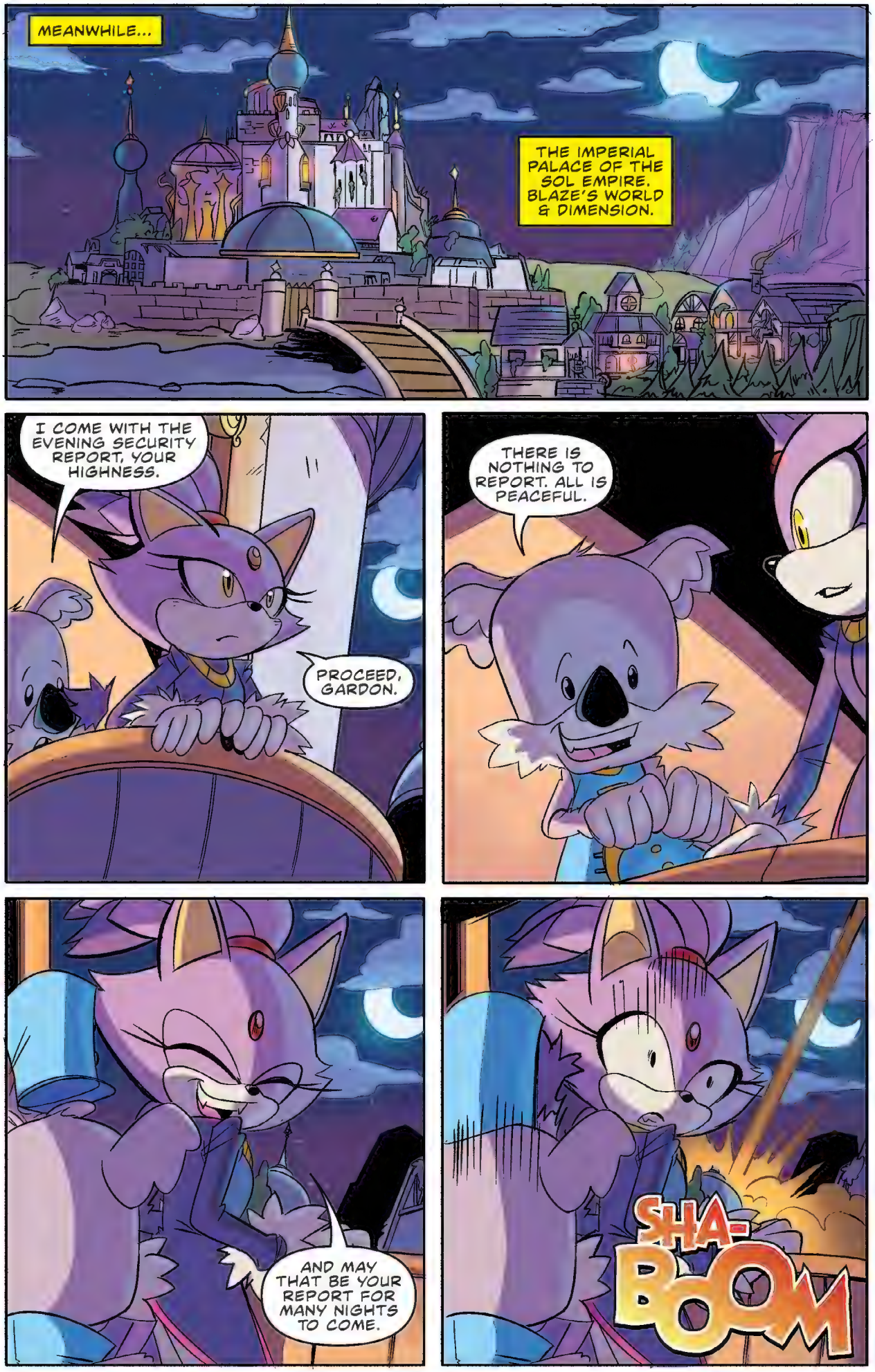
BREEP BREEP
SONIC IS M.I.A. I NEED TO STRIKE WHILE THE IRON IS HOT.

SHADOW IS CLOSING IN ON US! METAL SONIC! SLOW HIM DOWN SO I CAN REACH A SECURE ESCAPE ALTITUDE!

FWA-BOOM
BWOSH

POW
WHAM
WHAM
KLAT

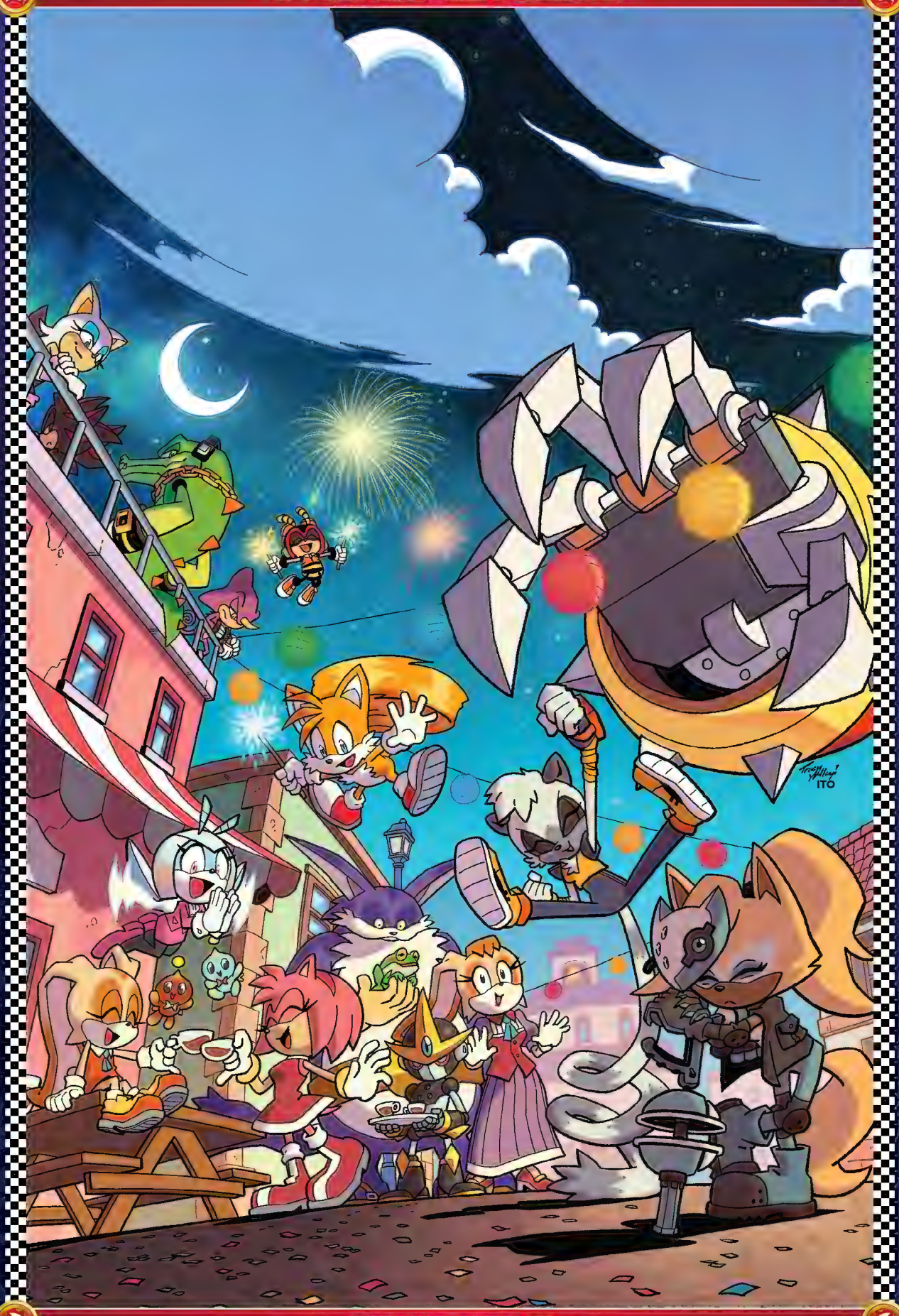
ZORCH

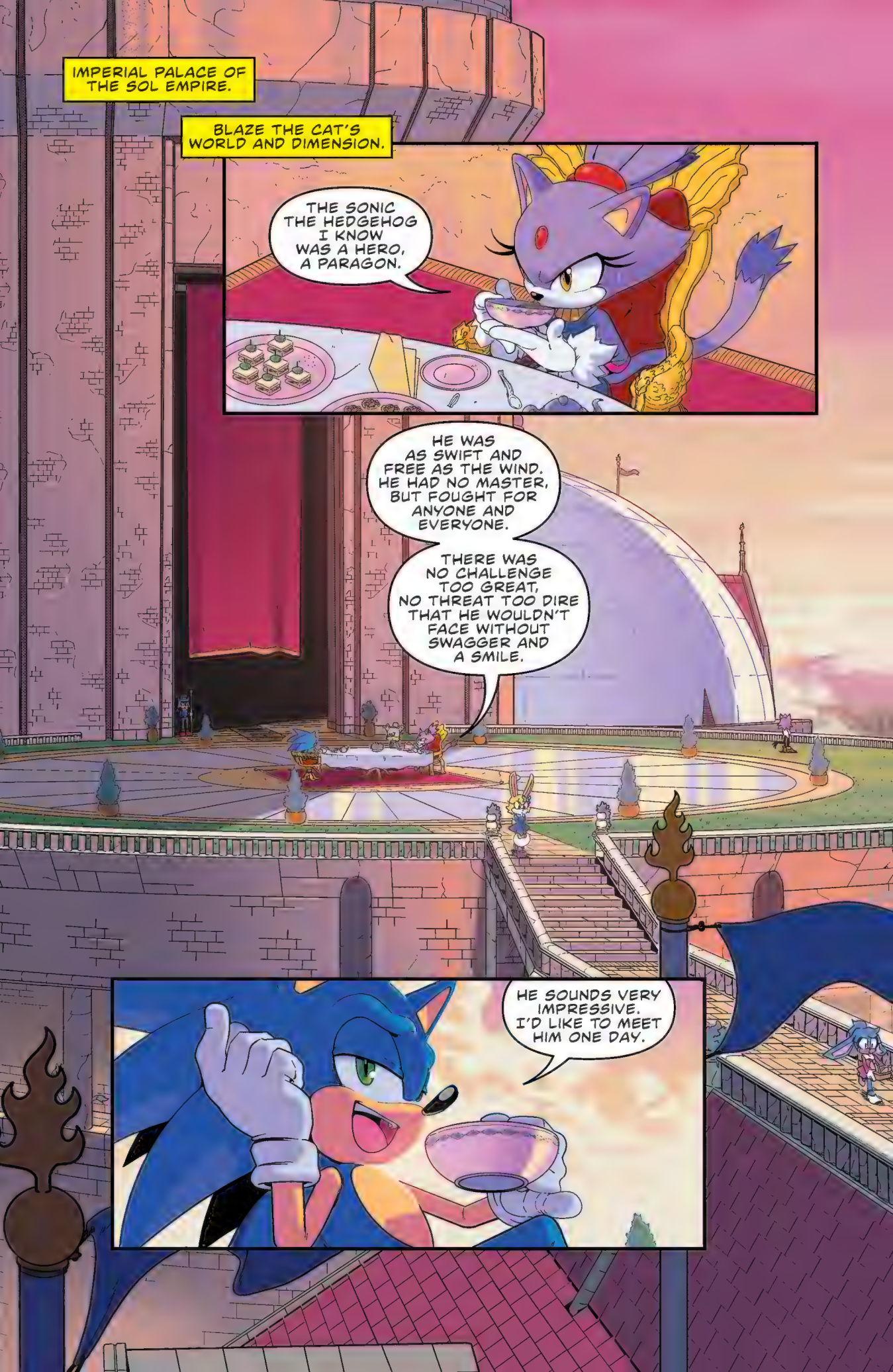

MEANWHILE...
THE IMPERIAL PALACE OF THE SOL EMPIRE. BLAZE'S WORLD & DIMENSION.
I COME WITH THE EVENING SECURITY REPORT, YOUR HIGHNESS.
PROCEED, GARDON.
THERE IS NOTHING TO REPORT. ALL IS PEACEFUL.
AND MAY THAT BE YOUR REPORT FOR MANY NIGHTS TO COME.
SHA-BOOM

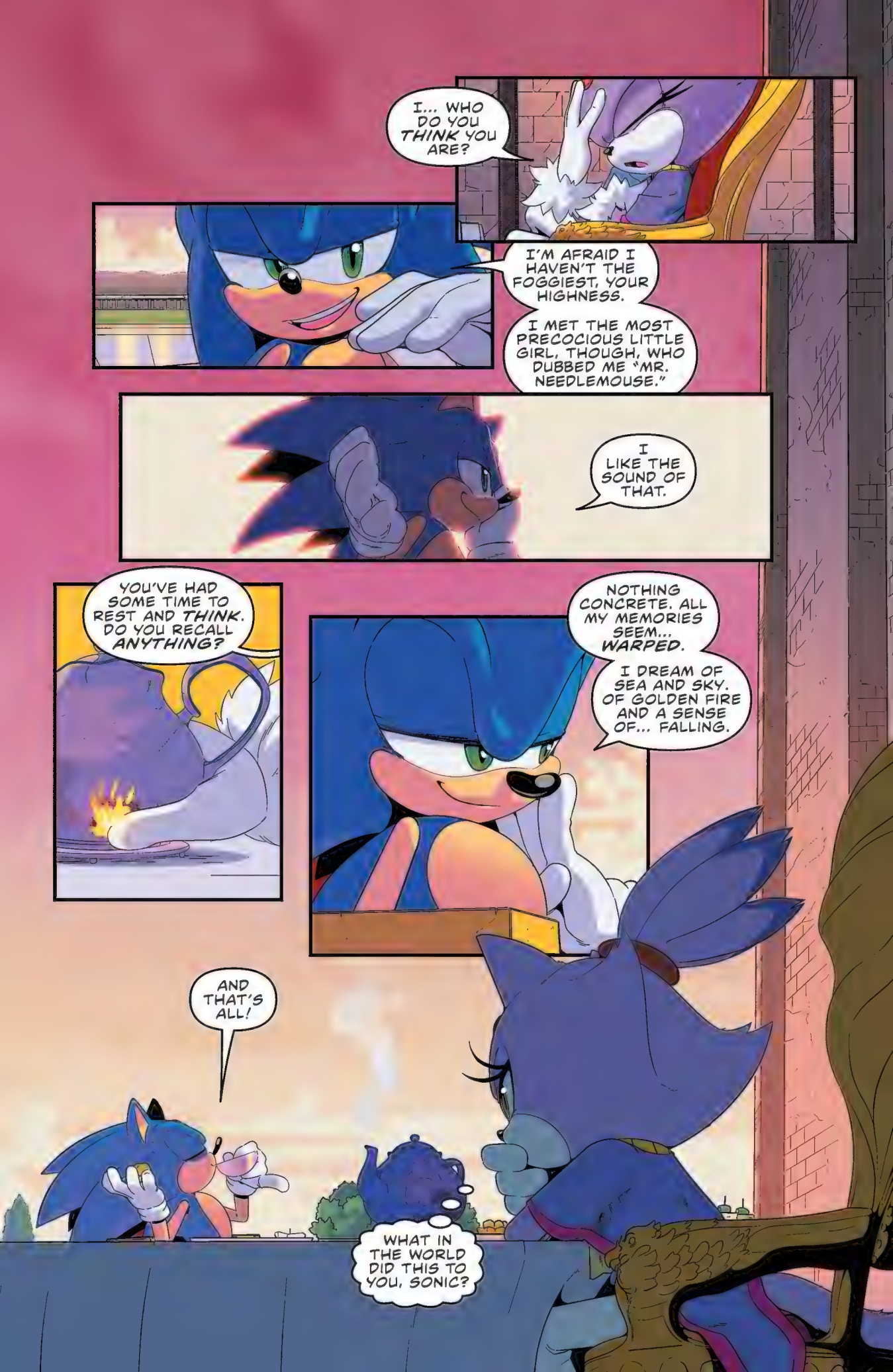
W-WAIT, PRINCESS! IT COULD BE DANGEROUS!
IF IT THREATENS ME IN MY OWN HOME, I WILL SHOW IT WHO IS "DANGEROUS."
IS... IS THAT...?!
YES!
IT'S SONIC THE HEDGEHOG!

ART BY NATHALIE FOURDRAINE

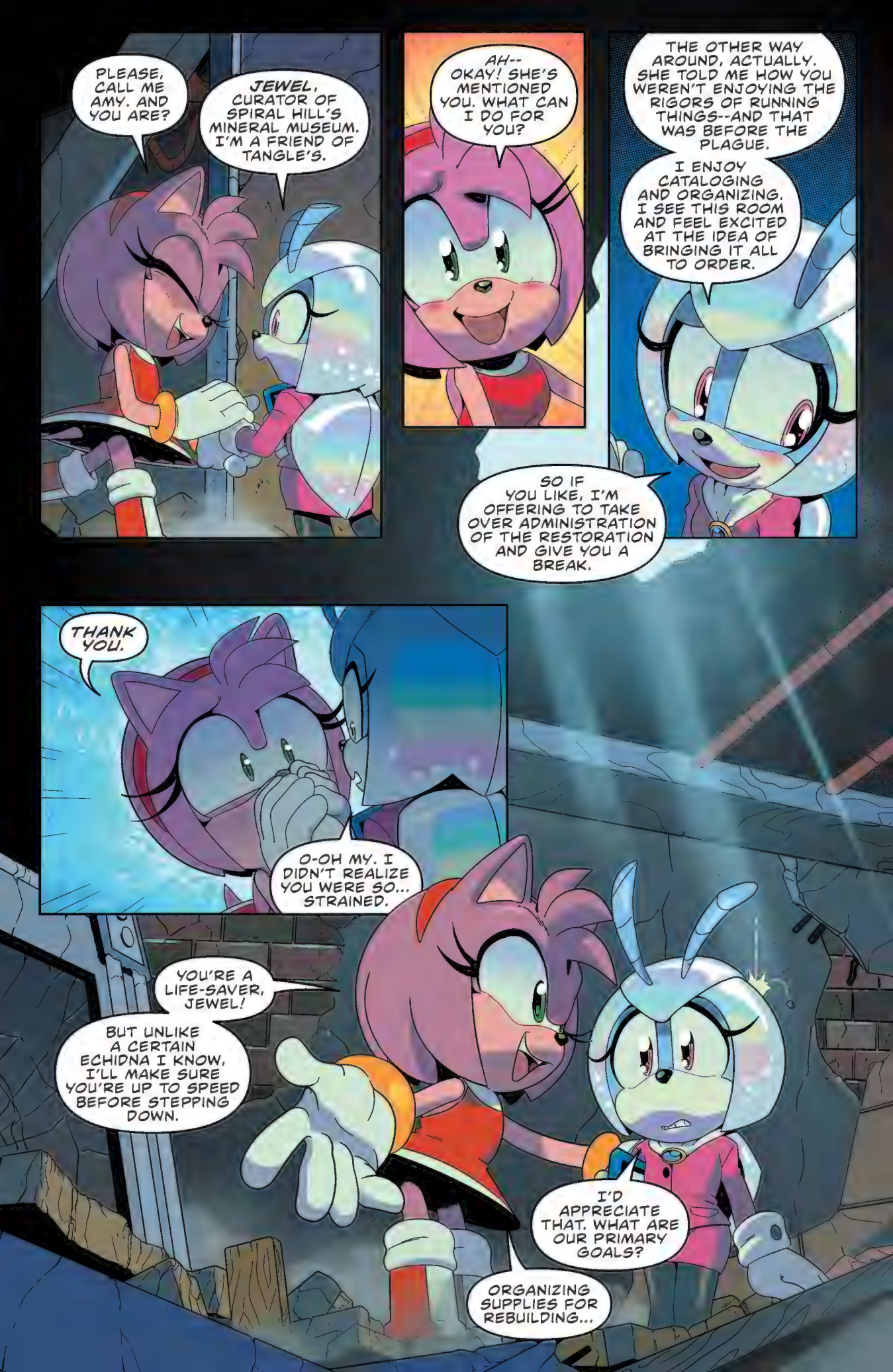
ART BY TRACY YARDLEY COLORS BY LEONARDO ITO




IMPERIAL PALACE OF THE SOL EMPIRE.
BLAZE THE CAT'S WORLD AND DIMENSION.
THE SONIC THE HEDGEHOG I KNOW WAS A HERO, A PARAGON.
HE WAS AS SWIFT AND FREE AS THE WIND. HE HAD NO MASTER, BUT FOUGHT FOR ANYONE AND EVERYONE.
THERE WAS NO CHALLENGE TOO GREAT, NO THREAT TOO DIRE THAT HE WOULDN'T FACE WITHOUT SWAGGER AND A SMILE.
HE SOUNDS VERY IMPRESSIVE. I'D LIKE TO MEET HIM ONE DAY.

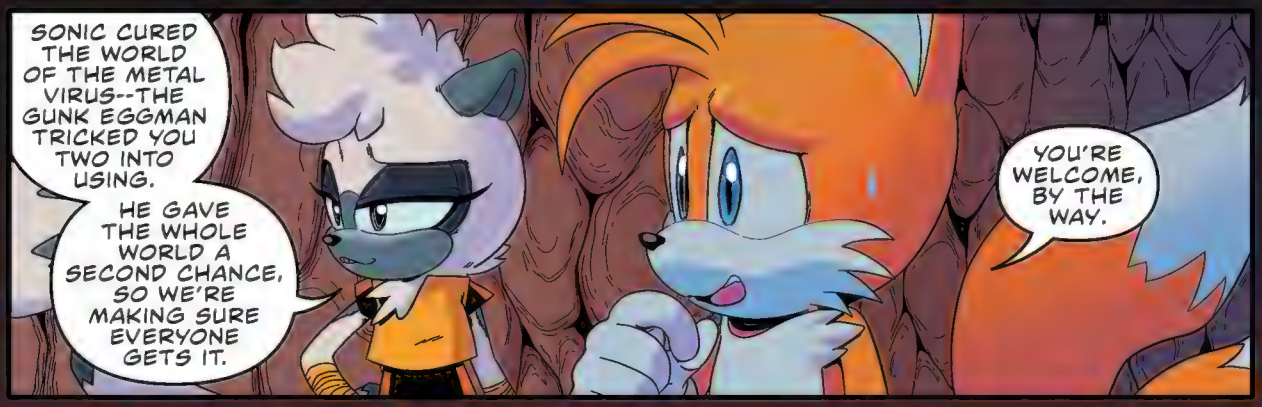

I... WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?
I'M AFRAID I HAVEN'T THE FOGGIEST, YOUR HIGHNESS.
I MET THE MOST PRECOCIOUS LITTLE GIRL, THOUGH, WHO DUBBED ME "MR. NEEDLEMOUSE."
I LIKE THE SOUND OF THAT.
YOU'VE HAD SOME TIME TO REST AND THINK. DO YOU RECALL ANYTHING?
NOTHING CONCRETE. ALL MY MEMORIES SEEM... WARPED.
I DREAM OF SEA AND SKY. OF GOLDEN FIRE AND A SENSE OF... FALLING.
AND THAT'S ALL!
WHAT IN THE WORLD DID THIS TO YOU, SONIC?

AND WHAT'S HAPPENING ON YOUR WORLD NOW?
RESTORATION HQ. SONIC'S WORLD & DIMENSION.
I CAN'T DO THIS...
...I'M NO LEADER! I HELPED ADMINISTRATE THE RESISTANCE BECAUSE EVERYONE NEEDED TO PITCH IN!
I ONLY TOOK OVER THE RESTORATION BECAUSE THERE WAS NOBODY ELSE AND THE WORK HAD TO BE DONE!
WHAT I WOULDN'T GIVE TO GO BACK TO THE DAYS WHEN IT WAS JUST ME AND SONIC RACING FROM ONE ADVENTURE TO THE NEXT...
...SONIC...
...HE GAVE EVERYTHING TO SAVE US FROM THE METAL VIRUS. HE NEVER GAVE UP--SO NEITHER SHOULD I.
BUT I WISH I HAD SOME HELP...
HELLO? MISS ROSE? AM I IN THE RIGHT PLACE?


PLEASE, CALL ME AMY. AND YOU ARE?
JEWEL, CURATOR OF SPIRAL HILL'S MINERAL MUSEUM. I'M A FRIEND OF TANGLE'S.
AH-- OKAY! SHE'S MENTIONED YOU. WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?
THE OTHER WAY AROUND, ACTUALLY. SHE TOLD ME HOW YOU WEREN'T ENJOYING THE RIGORS OF RUNNING THINGS--AND THAT WAS BEFORE THE PLAGUE.
I ENJOY CATALOGING AND ORGANIZING. I SEE THIS ROOM AND FEEL EXCITED AT THE IDEA OF BRINGING IT ALL TO ORDER.
SO IF YOU LIKE, I'M OFFERING TO TAKE OVER ADMINISTRATION OF THE RESTORATION AND GIVE YOU A BREAK.
THANK YOU.
O-OH MY. I DIDN'T REALIZE YOU WERE SO... STRAINED.
YOU'RE A LIFE-SAVER, JEWEL!
BUT UNLIKE A CERTAIN ECHIDNA I KNOW, I'LL MAKE SURE YOU'RE UP TO SPEED BEFORE STEPPING DOWN.
I'D APPRECIATE THAT. WHAT ARE OUR PRIMARY GOALS?
ORGANIZING SUPPLIES FOR REBUILDING...

"...AND FINDING PEOPLE DISPLACED BY THEIR TIME AS ZOMBOTS."
ECHO MINE.
NO WAY OUT.
BELLIES STARTING TO GRUMBLE.
LOOKS LIKE THIS IS THE END FOR ROUGH &TUMBLE!
PAFF
GAH! CAVE SPIDER!
YOU GUYS OKAY?
GRAB MY TAIL! I'LL HELP HAUL YOU OUT!
WOO-HOO!
WE'RE SAVED!
IT JUST AIN'T FAIR...

AND TO ADD INSULT TO INJURY...
WHAT'S THE DEAL? HOW COME YOU'RE BEING NICE TO US?


SONIC CURED THE WORLD OF THE METAL VIRUS--THE GUNK EGGMAN TRICKED YOU TWO INTO USING.
HE GAVE THE WHOLE WORLD A SECOND CHANCE, SO WE'RE MAKING SURE EVERYONE GETS IT.
YOU'RE WELCOME, BY THE WAY.

BWA HA HAHA

YOU DORKS JUST GAVE US A FREE PASS TO RUN WILD!
LOOK OUT WORLD! THE BADDEST BOYS ARE BACK!

SO... BACK IN JAIL BY THE END OF THE DAY?
IF THEY DON'T GET LOST IN THE MINES.

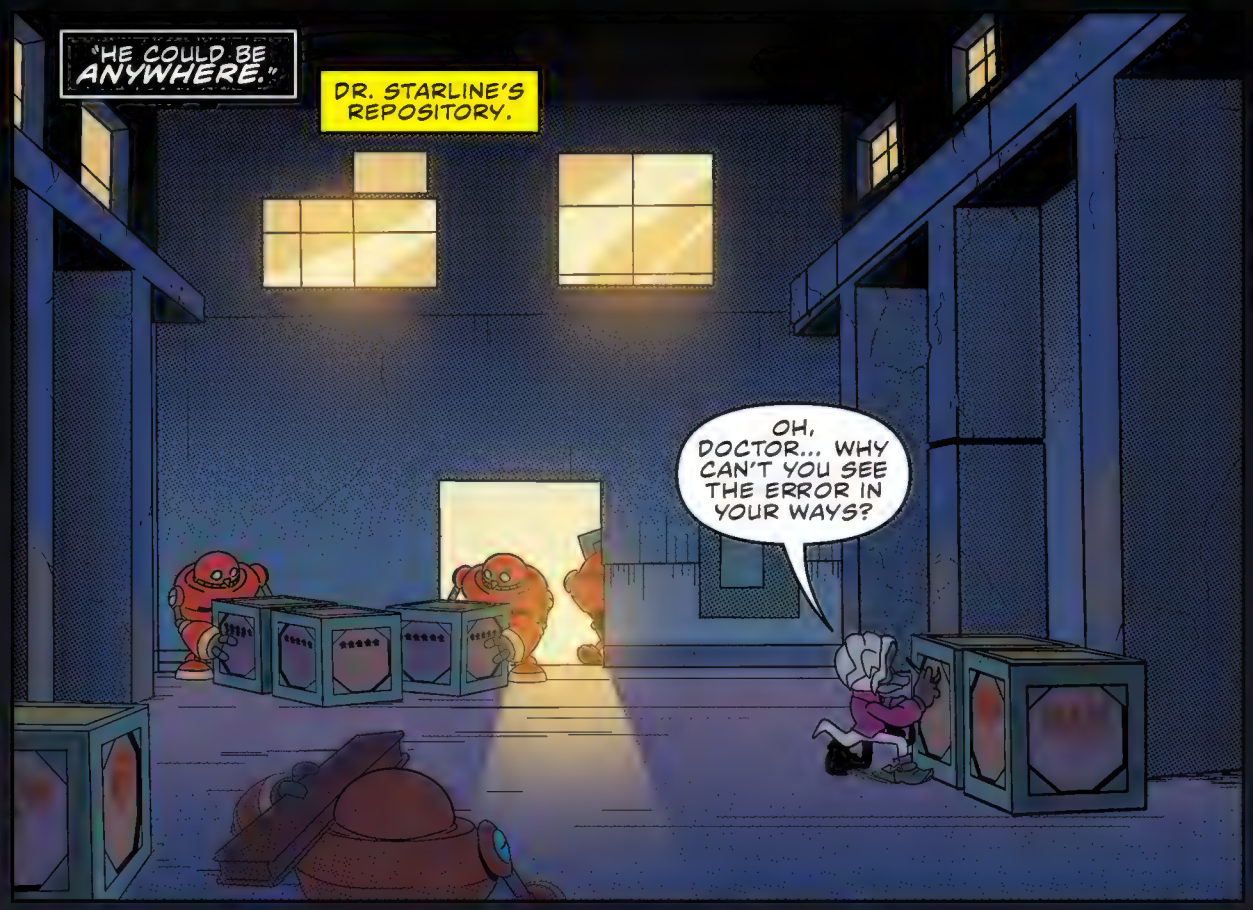
HOW ARE YOU HANDLING SONIC BEING... Y'KNOW...?
I'M FINE.
I MEAN IT, LITTLE DUDE.
ME TOO. AND IT'S GOING TO BE OKAY, I PROMISE.
I'M SURE WE'LL SEE SONIC AGAIN ONE DAY. HE'S BEATEN THE ODDS A MILLION TIMES AND...
...I BELIEVE IN HIM. BECAUSE HE'S NEVER LET ME DOWN.
AND UNTIL THEN, HE'LL BE COUNTING ON US TO KEEP THE PEACE.
??
I CAN SEE WHY HE'S ALWAYS HANGING OUT WITH YOU. YOU'RE ACES!
AWW! THANKS!
AND SONIC WOULD EXPECT US TO CELEBRATE US SURVIVING!
OF COURSE!
PARTY'S AT MY PLACE! AND EVERYONE IS INVITED!

"TOO BAD SILVER'S ALREADY GONE HOME!"
THE FUTURE.
WELL... I'M BACK TO MY OWN TIME PERIOD. THE GRASS IS NORMAL. THAT'S... A GOOD SIGN.
BUT A LOT CAN CHANGE IN A COUPLE HUNDRED YEARS. IS EVERYTHING RESTORED, OR...?
SONIC... EVERYONE... THANK YOU. WE MADE A GOOD FUTURE.

DR. EGGMAN'S LAB-- THE PRESENT.
"MAY YOUR TIME STAY PEACEFUL, TOO."
EGG-V0678
AND NOW FOR THE FINISHING TOUCH!
HOW DOES IT FEEL TO BE CORPOREAL AGAIN, OMEGA?
GOOD. DESTROYING YOU WILL ENHANCE THIS BY 90%.
WOO-HA-HA-HA! OH, I BET IT WOULD! BUT I LOCKED DOWN YOUR BODY, SO THERE WILL BE NO MAYHEM FOR YOU!
SATISFACTION DECREASED BY 100%.
IT GETS BETTER! I'LL BE USING YOU FOR A SPECIAL PROJECT.
WELCOME BACK TO THE EGGMAN EMPIRE, E-123!
HATRED PROCESSING AT PEAK EFFICIENCY!

ORBOT! CUBOT! REPORT!
NO GOOD NEWS I'M AFRAID, BOSS.
THE ZOMBOTS REALLY DID A NUMBER ON YOUR BASES, ESPECIALLY ONCE THE DEADLY SIX TOOK OVER.
WHERE ARE THOSE MISERABLE ZETI, ANYWAY?
ZAVOK WAS DEFEATED AND HAS BEEN SAFELY LOCKED AWAY.
THE OTHER FIVE ARE AT LARGE BUT APPEAR TO BE LAYING LOW.

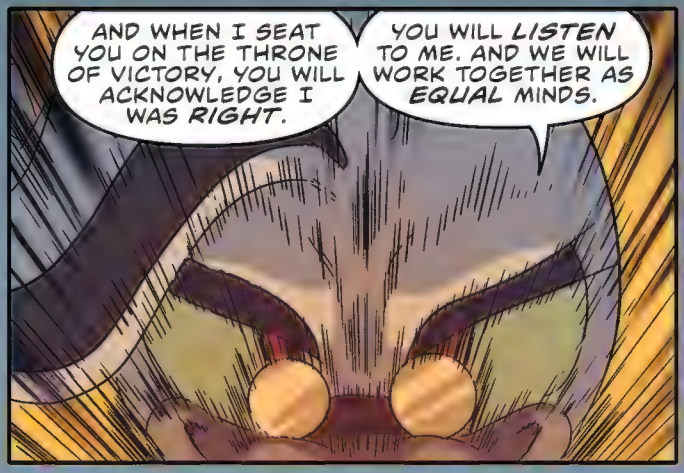
THERE'S NOTHING FOR IT, THEN. IT'S FULL STEAM AHEAD ON THE NEXT PROJECT!
GEE, BOSS, WHY NOT TAKE A VACATION?
INDEED. YOU WORKED *VERY* HARD TRYING TO DOOM US ALL.
AND I KNOW *I'D* LIKE SOME TIME OFF.
YEAH! GO SOME PLACE NICE. LIKE THE BASEMENT!
KEEP DREAMING BIG, BUDDY.
THIS IS NO TIME TO REST. I NEED TO ESTABLISH MY NEXT PLAN BEFORE SONIC INEVITABLY RETURNS TO CAUSE ME HEADACHES.
AND NOW I HAVE TO FACTOR IN THE ERRANT ZETI. THE CACOPHONIC CONCH WAS LOST WHEN ROUGE CRASHED THE FACESHIP, WHICH LEAVES ME DEFENSELESS AGAINST THEM.
AND THERE'S DR. STARLINE TO CONSIDER...
OH, YEAH! I LIKED HIM! HE SMELLED NICE.
WHATEVER HAPPENED TO YOUR FANBOY-- I MEAN-- PROTEGE?
THAT'S THE THING-- *I DON'T KNOW.*
HE OPENED A WARP PORTAL, AND I PUNTED HIM THROUGH IT. I DIDN'T THINK TO LOOK WHERE HE WAS RETREATING TO.


"HE COULD BE ANYWHERE."
DR. STARLINE'S REPOSITORY.
OH, DOCTOR... WHY CAN'T YOU SEE THE ERROR IN YOUR WAYS?

EGGMAN TRULY IS THE GENIUS I THOUGHT HIM TO BE, BUT HE'S *INEPT* IN HIS EXECUTION!
AND SONIC IS EVERY BIT THE POWERHOUSE I EXPECTED, BUT HE'S JUST... RECKLESS!

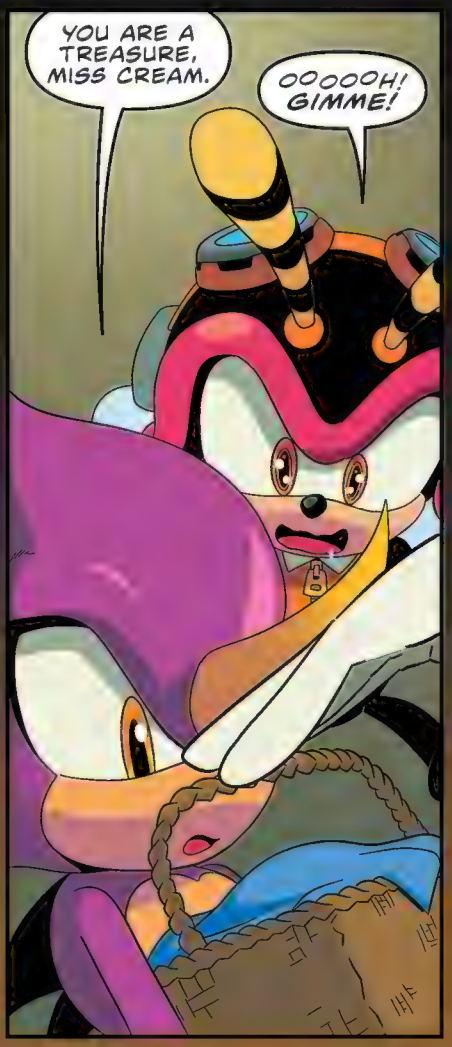
SO MUCH WASTED POTENTIAL. BUT *I* HAVE THE CLARITY OF VISION. I CAN... *IMPROVE* UPON THEM.

FEAR NOT, DOCTOR. I AM STILL LOYAL, DESPITE YOUR CRUELTY.
I'LL CONQUER THE WORLD. SURPASS YOU SO THAT YOU MIGHT LEARN BY EXAMPLE.


AND WHEN I SEAT YOU ON THE THRONE OF VICTORY, YOU WILL ACKNOWLEDGE I WAS *RIGHT*.
YOU WILL *LISTEN* TO ME. AND WE WILL WORK TOGETHER AS *EQUAL* MINDS.

CHAOTIX DETECTIVE AGENCY. SEASIDE CITY.
CHAOTIX DETECTIVE AGENCY! PLEASE HOLD!
YES! I'M THE LEAD DETECTIVE! PLEASE HOLD!
NO! I SAID A DOUBLE-EXTRA LARGE, NO CHEESE! PLEASE HOLD!
RING RING
SO MANY MISSING PERSONS CASES...
...ALMOST MAKES ME MISS THE DAYS WHEN WE COULDN'T FIND WORK!
KNOCK-KNOCK
PLEASE HOLD! I MEAN...IT'S OPEN! WE'LL BE WITH YOU IN A... MINUTE? HOUR? SOMETIME THIS WEEK?

HELLO, EVERYONE!
YOU'VE BEEN WORKING SO HARD TO REUNITE EVERYONE AND THEIR FAMILIES! SO WE BROUGHT YOU LOTS OF TASTY TREATS TO KEEP YOU GOING!


YOU ARE A TREASURE, MISS CREAM.
OOOOOH! GIMME!

EVEN AT THE HEIGHT OF THE PLAGUE, YOU WERE ALL SO SELFLESS.
OH! WELL! I-IT'S ALL PART OF BEING A GOOD DETECTIVE, MA'AM.
PLEASE! CALL ME VANILLA.

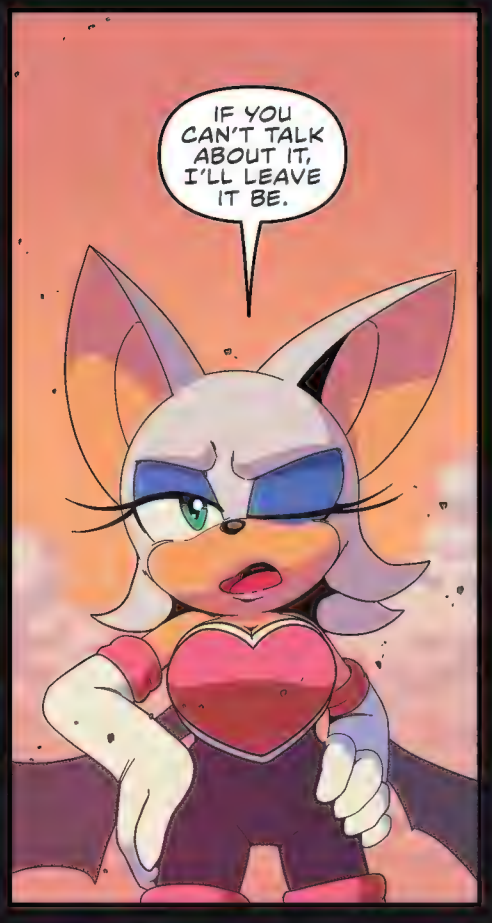
O-OKAY!

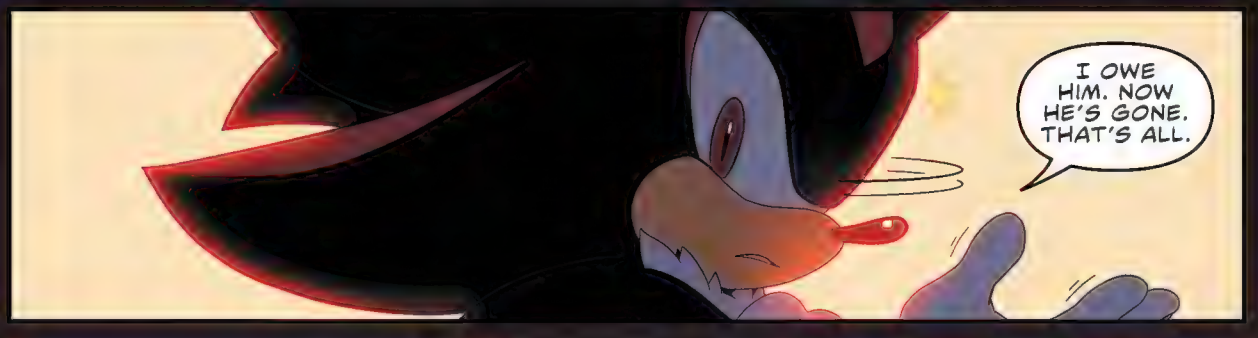
RING
RING
RING

SORRY, VANILLA, BUT WE DON'T HAVE TIME TO EAT. OR SLEEP. OR DO OUR JOB, IRONICALLY.
RING RING RING
WELL THAT SIMPLY WON'T DO. GEMERL, WOULD YOU MIND HELPING?
AT ONCE. SCANNING DATA. PREPARING A DATABASE OF ALL MISSING PERSONS.
CHEESE? CHOCOLA? PUT THE FILES AWAY PLEASE?
CREAM AND I WILL HANDLE THE CALLS FOR NOW AND UPDATE YOU AS GEMERL PROCESSES INFORMATION.
I'LL TAKE LOTS OF NOTES!
SO THAT MEANS...
...WE'RE FREE TO DO OUR THING! LET'S GO, CHAOTIX!

FOREST HILL.
"TIME TO FIND THOSE MISSING PEOPLE!"
THERE YOU ARE!
YOU CAN BE A PAIN TO TRACK DOWN, Y'KNOW?
THINGS SEEMED TO HAVE SETTLED DOWN.
ALL THE BAD GUYS ARE IN HIDING. AT LEAST THEY'RE NOT CAUSING TROUBLE.
BUT... I CAN'T FIND ANY SIGN OF SONIC OR OMEGA.
DID YOU HEAR A WORD I SAID?
YES.
WHAT'S UP? YOU'RE EVEN MORE BROODING THAN USUAL.

HE SAID TO RUN. WHAT I THOUGHT WAS COWARDICE WAS A WARNING. THAT ONE MISTAKE TOOK ME OUT OF THE FIGHT.
ME--THE ULTIMATE LIFE-FORM-- MISCALCULATING LIKE THAT...
...IT'S UNACCEPTABLE!


IF YOU CAN'T TALK ABOUT IT, I'LL LEAVE IT BE.


I OWE HIM. NOW HE'S GONE. THAT'S ALL.

THERE'S A BIG PARTY GOING DOWN AT SPIRAL HILL TONIGHT. EVERYONE'S INVITED-- EVEN YOU.
PASS.
FIGURED, BUT I THOUGHT I'D TRY.

SPIRAL HILL VILLAGE.

WHERE'S MY ICE SCULPTURE? I NEARLY GOT INFECTED TO SAVE YOU INGRATES! WHERE'S MY RECOGNITION?!
DINNER, AND A SHOW.
WE OUGHTA SAVE THE WORLD MORE OFTEN!
SIMMER, GIRL.
THEY ATTACKED THE TOWN.
YEAH, BUT THEY DID HELP SAVE US ALL. LET'S GIVE 'EM THIS ONE.
PLUS I'D RATHER NOT HAVE ANOTHER FIGHT IN MY HOME TOWN SO SOON, Y'KNOW?
I UNDER-STAND.
THAT'S MY GIRL! NOW LET'S GET SOME GRUB FOR YOUR WISPS!
THEY DO EAT, RIGHT?
MWA-HA-HA-HA! THE LIFE OF THE PARTY'S HERE!
YOU GOTTA BE KIDDIN' ME!

AND I'LL BE ENDING ALL OF YOURS!

ART BY NATHALIE FOURDRAINE

ART BY TRACY YARDLEY COLORS BY LEONARDO ITO

SPIRAL HILL VILLAGE.
TREMBLE IN FEAR, FOOLS! I AM DR. EGGMAN--GREATEST OF PARTY CRASHERS IN THE FIERCEST OF PARTY CRUSHERS!

I SIMPLY MUST THANK YOU FOR GATHERING TOGETHER IN ONE PLACE!
IT MAKES DESTROYING YOU ALL SO MUCH EASIER!
AMY. ORDERS?
I'M NOT LEADING THE RESTORATION ANYMORE.
I PASSED IT OFF TO JEWEL.
JEWEL. ORDERS?
I DON'T KNOW! I'M JUST HANDLING THE PAPERWORK! YOU'RE ALL THE HERO-TYPES!
WHAT'S THE CALL, JET?
WHAT DO YOU THINK?
FROGGY? WHERE ARE YOU?
WE ALREADY HELPED THESE JERKS ONCE.
LET THEM HANDLE EGGMAN WHILE WE HELP OURSELVES TO THE GEMS AND GET OUTTA HERE!

TAILS! USE YOUR COMPUTER THINGY AND TRY TO MESS WITH THE MECHA'S PROGRAMMING!
CUSTOM CODING, COMING UP!
FLYING GUYS! TRY TO BUST INTO THE COCKPIT!
THE REST OF YOU ARE WITH ME!
AIM FOR THE LEG JOINTS AND BRING HIM DOWN!
WHERE ARE ALL THE GEMS?!
IT'LL HURT RETURNING THESE, BUT IT'S WORTH IT JUST FOR THIS MOMENT.

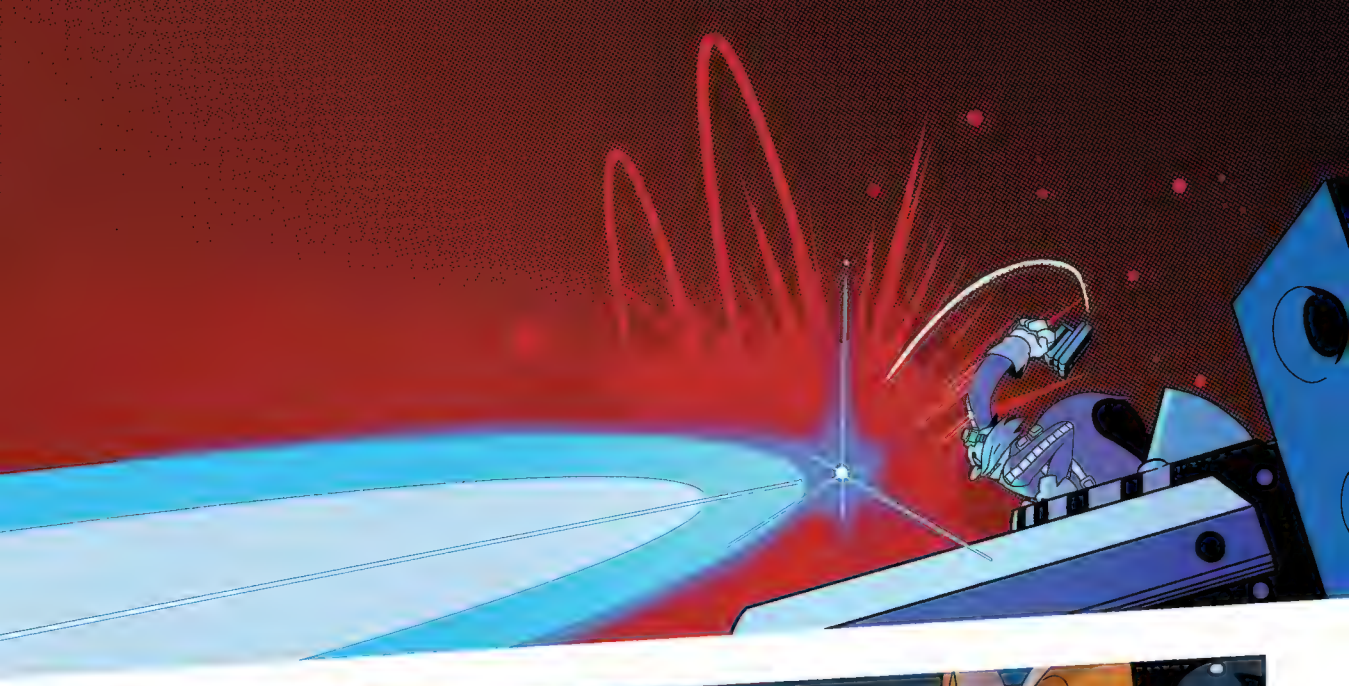
YOU WILL NOT MENACE CREAM FURTHER!
GEMERL! BE CAREFUL!
FRIP
FRIP
FRIP
BWA-HA-HA-HA!
THAT'S TWO WAYWARD CREATIONS BACK UNDER MY CONTROL! NOW I HAVE TWICE THE COMBAT CODING AND PROCESSING POWER--A QUADRUPLE POWER-UP OVERALL!
SO THANKS FOR THE UPGRADE!
FWEEEEEE
ZOP
BIAM

IMPERIAL PALACE OF THE SOL EMPIRE. BLAZE'S WORLD & DIMENSION.
HOW ARE YOU THIS EVENING... "MR. NEEDLE-MOUSE?"
OH, HELLO, YOUR HIGHNESS. JUST TAKING A BRIEF JOG--A FEW LAPS-- AROUND THE ISLAND ON THIS LOVELY EVENING.
AT LEAST HE'S STILL RUNNING AROUND...
TRULY.
WHILE I AGREE WE MUST DO ANYTHING TO HELP HIM, ARE YOU SURE THIS WILL WORK?
NO. THE NATURE OF SONIC'S ARRIVAL, HIS MEMORY LOSS, ARE ALL A MYSTERY. ANYTHING WE ATTEMPT WILL HAVE A DEGREE OF UNCERTAINTY TO IT.
BUT I HAVE FAITH IN THE POWER OF THE SOL EMERALDS. AND AS THEIR GUARDIAN, ONLY I MAY USE THEIR POWER FOR THIS TASK.

SONIC.
YOU KEEP CALLING ME THAT, BUT-- OH, MY.
MAY THE POWER OF THE SOL EMERALDS HELP YOU TO REMEMBER!
GAZE INTO THE SACRED FIRE AND HAVE IT FUEL THE WINDS OF YOUR SPIRIT!
RECALL OUR PAST ADVENTURES! RECALL ALL THE GOOD YOU HAVE DONE!
RETURN TO US! RETURN TO THE HERO I KNOW YOU TO BE!
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? WHY ARE YOU ON FIRE?! AND WHY--
--WHY IS IT SO FAMILIAR...?

SPIRAL HILL VILLAGE. SONIC'S WORLD & DIMENSION.
SO THIS IS NEW AND TERRIBLE. GOT A PLAN, SWEETIE?
I'VE WRITTEN SOME CODE THAT SHOULD INTERFERE WITH THAT THING'S SYSTEMS AND EJECT GEMERL, BUT THERE'S NO WIRELESS RECEIVER!
I'LL NEED A HARD LINE TO UPLOAD IT!
WELL, BREAKING-AND-ENTERING IS SORT OF MY THING. TELL ME WHEN YOU'RE READY TO GO.
LOOK FOR AN ACCESS PANEL ON THE BACK IN THREE... TWO... ONE...
GO!
CONSTRUCTION ON THIS IS PRETTY SHODDY. THE DOCTOR THREW THIS TOGETHER IN A HURRY.
SO HE PROBABLY DIDN'T DO MUCH TO HIDE--
--EUREKA!

THANKS, ROUGE! NOW TO RUIN EGGMAN'S DAY!
ZOOM
YOU OKAY, BUDDY?
SYSTEM... REBOOT... INITIATED...
HEY! THAT'S NOT JUST A WEIRD COSMETIC CHOICE! OMEGA IS LITERALLY PART OF THIS THING!
WELL, GET HIM OUT!
I'M WORKING ON IT! BUT HE'S HARDWIRED INTO THE CHASSIS. I'LL SEE IF THERE'S AN EJECTION PROTOCOL...
HACK INTO MY SYSTEMS, WILL HE?!



POW
GET DOWN!

PRIMARY SYSTEMS ONLINE. SECONDARY PROGRAMMING ACTIVE.

MUST DESTROY EGGMAN! MUST... DESTROY... EGGMAN'S... ENEMIES!
WARNING! CASCADE ERROR!
SO MUCH TO SHOOT! TOO CONFLICTED TO AIM!

THE BARRAGE HAS STOPPED... HE'S STUCK! LET'S GET HIM WHILE WE CAN!

BONK
SHUNK
BAH! I'VE TOYED WITH YOU FOOLS LONG ENOUGH!
OMEGA! BACK ON YOUR LEASH!
TACKITY- TACKITY- TACKITY
C'MON! FIGHT HIM!
SYSTEM... OVERRIDE...
EEP!

HOW DO YOU FEEL NOW?
...SONIC?
LIKE I DID ONE TOO MANY LOOP-DE-LOOPS IN A ROW. BUT *DEFINITELY* A LOT LESS WARPED.
THANKS FOR PUTTING CHILI BACK ON MY DOG, BLAZE.
I'M JUST HAPPY TO HAVE YOU BACK TO YOUR OLD SELF.
CAN YOU REMEMBER IF YOUR WORLD IS ALL RIGHT?
IT'S FUZZY BUT... YEAH. THINGS WERE DICEY, BUT SILVER AND I HANDLED IT.
AND IN "HANDLING IT," YOU CRASH-LANDED IN MY GARDEN WITH AMNESIA.
HEH, WELL... YOU KNOW ME. I LIKE TO MAKE AN ENTRANCE.
SORRY, BY THE WAY.

NOT TO SOUND UNGRATEFUL, BUT I DIDN'T EXACTLY SAY "GOOD-BYE" BEFORE LEAVING.
EVERYBODY MUST BE WORRIED.
CAN YOU SEND ME HOME?
OF COURSE.
PLEASE GIVE MY BEST TO AMY AND CREAM.
WILL DO. BUT COME VISIT SOON, OKAY?
WE ALL MISS HAVING YOU AROUND.
THANK YOU. I WILL.
BWOSH

YOU PUT UP A DECENT FIGHT, BUT IT'S TIME TO RAZE YOU AND THIS VILLAGE TO THE GROUND!
OH, NOW WHAT?!
BWOOSH
HEY, GUYS. MISS ME?

LOOKS LIKE I'M UNFASHIONABLY LATE. WHAT'S THE SITCH, LI'L BRO?
EGGMAN IS USING OMEGA AS THE CORE FOR THE BIGGER MECHA!
GOT IT!
NO NO NO!!!
I HAD THEM! I'D WON!
WHAM
WHAM
WHAM
WHAM
OUT... YOU... GO!
UNLEASHING STOCKPILED WRATH!

BRAKKA-RAKKA-RAKKA
AMMO DEPLETED.
S'ALL GOOD, MAN. YOU DID YOUR PART.
DO NOT PATRONIZE ME.
YOU JUST COULDN'T STAY GONE, COULD YOU?! JUST HAD TO COME BACK AND RUIN MY FUN!
ALWAYS, EGG-FACE. ANYTIME. ANYWHERE.
COME A LITTLE CLOSER. WE'LL GO ANOTHER ROUND.

STILL SORE ABOUT THAT WHOLE "GETTING INFECTED AND NEARLY BECOMING A MINDLESS MACHINE" THING, EH?
THAT'S PART OF THE LIST, YES.
WELL... I STILL RUINED YOUR PARTY! THE DAY IS MINE!
MY NEXT SINISTER PLOT WILL BE UNBEATABLE! UNTIL NEXT TIME, YOU WRETCHED HEDGEHOG!
UNTIL NEXT TIME, DOC. AND THE TIME AFTER THAT, AND THE ONE AFTER THAT.
MAYBE YOU'LL EVENTUALLY COME AROUND...
SONIC!

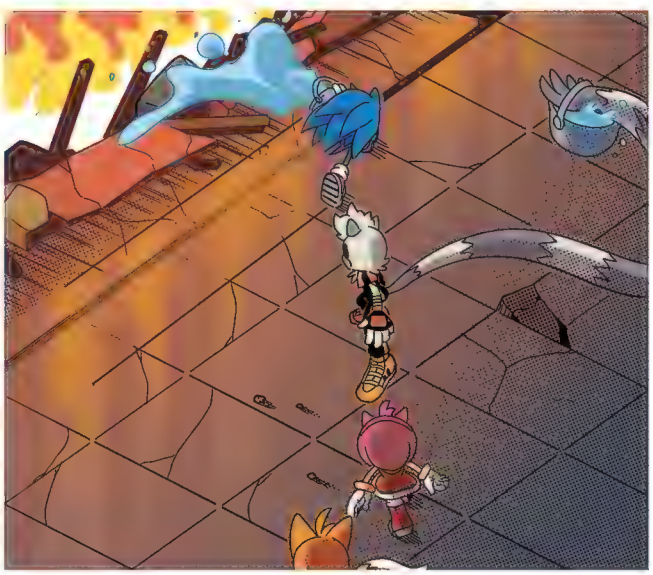
I WAS WORRIED WE'D NEVER SEE YOU AGAIN!
AWW... IT WAS JUST A LITTLE CATACLYSMIC, REALITY-BENDING EXPLOSION. I WAS FINE.
BLAZE SAYS "HEY," BY THE WAY.
I KNEW YOU'D BE BACK! I KNEW IT!
YO! ARE WE GETTING OUR VICTORIOUS GROUP HUG ON?
YOU KNOW IT!
YEAH! EVERYBODY GETS IN ON THIS!

TANGLE...
WHOOPS! MISSED YOU! I THINK YOU CAN WEDGE IN HERE BETWEEN ME AND SONIC!
I HATE TO RUIN THE MOOD, BUT...

...THE TOWN IS STILL ON FIRE.

EASILY FIXED. YOUR TOWN IS REALLY INVASION-PRONE, Y'KNOW THAT?
I'LL HAVE YOU KNOW WE WERE PERFECTLY BORING UNTIL YOU SHOWED UP, MISTER!
HAHA! LET'S GO!

HE NEVER STOPS, DOES HE?
NOPE! AND NEITHER SHOULD WE-- COME ON!



IT'S GOOD TO BE BACK. GOOD TO BE HEALTHY.
I HOPE SILVER AND BLAZE CAN COME BACK AND NOT HAVE TO DEAL WITH SOME KIND OF DISASTER.
A NEW DAY MEANS NEW ADVENTURES! SO NO MORE LYING AROUND...
...TIME TO FIND OUT WHAT COMES NEXT!

ART BY NATHALIE FOURDRAINE

ART BY AARON HAMMERSTROM INKS & COLORS BY PRISCILLA TRAMONTANO

ART BY DIANA SKELLY

ART BY TRACY YARDLEY COLORS BY BRACARDI CURRY

ART BY AARON HAMMERSTROM

ART BY ADAM BRYCE THOMAS

ART BY AARON HAMMERSTROM & REGGIE GRAHAM

ART BY JONATHAN GRAY COLORS BY REGGIE GRAHAM

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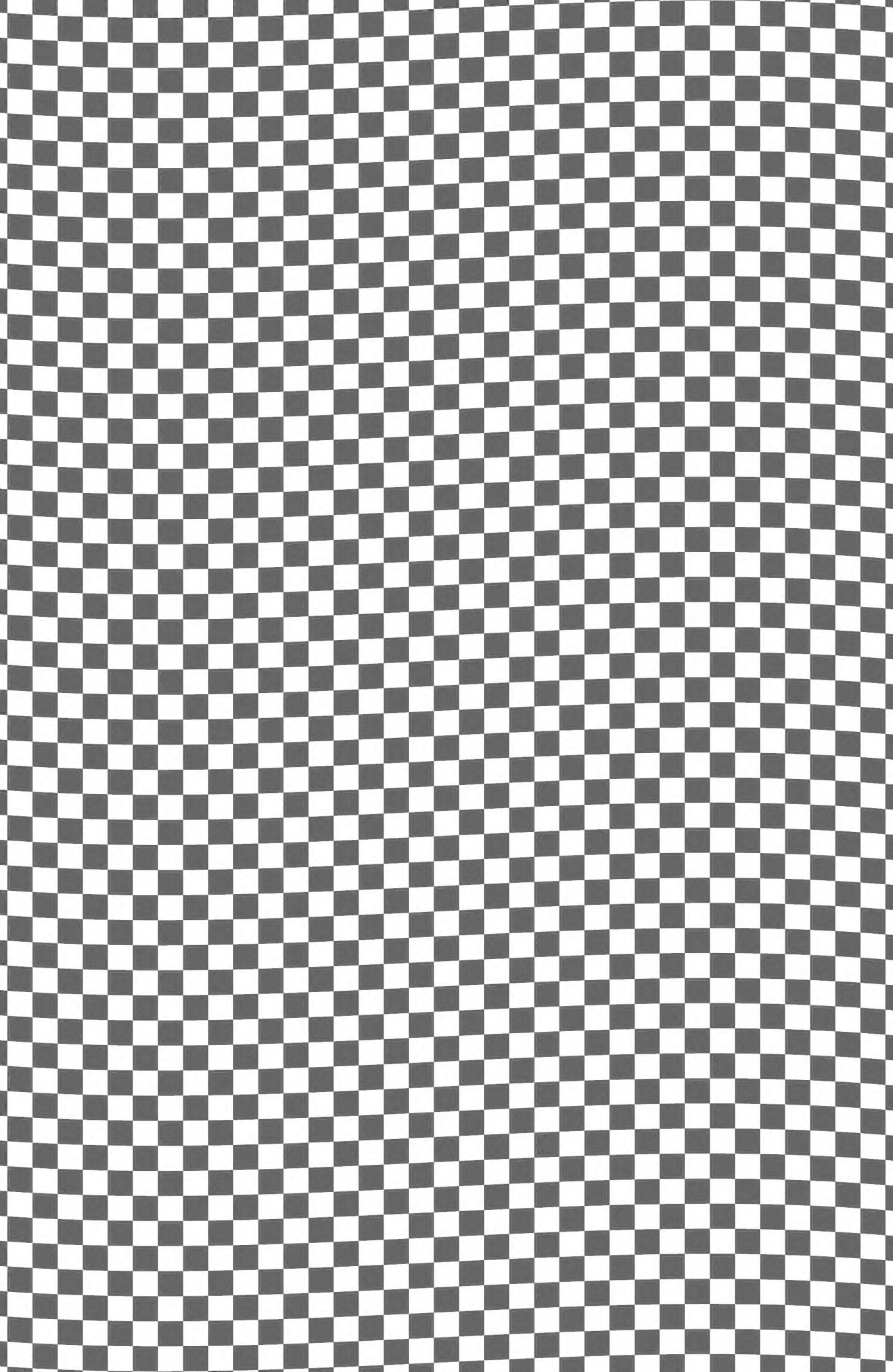

CAN SONIC OUTRUN A VIRUS THAT TURNS EVERYONE INTO ROBOTIC ZOMBIES?

The world has fallen to the Metal Virus, a manufactured plague that transforms all it infects into mechanized "Zombots" under Dr. Eggman's command. Even Sonic has been infected, though his speed has allowed him to keep the virus at bay. Now, with the population more infected than not and the virus constantly spreading, Sonic and his friends in the Restoration launch a desperate plan!

But, when things go from bad to worse, our heroes find themselves on Angel Island, the last safe place on the planet. Sonic and his remaining allies have no choice but to form an alliance with their old foe Dr. Eggman to defeat the Deadly Six and reclaim the Chaos Emeralds in a last-ditch effort to save everything!

Collecting all the *Sonic the Hedgehog* stories in reading order for the first time ever, Volume 3 features issues #21–32 of the ongoing series by writer **Ian Flynn** and artists **Adam Bryce Thomas, Priscilla Tramontano, Evan Stanley, Jack Lawrence, Lamar Wells, Reggie Graham,** and **Jennifer Hernandez,** plus the *2020 Annual,* with stories by **Jonathan Gray, Caleb Goellner, Aaron Hammerstrom, Sarah Graley, Sam King, Gigi Dutreix, Abby Bulmer,** and **Jamal Peppers.**

IDW